

LUXURY AS A THEME IN LATIN LOVE ELEGY

by

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## ABSTRACT

The territorial expansion of Rome in the second and first centuries B.C. was accompanied by an influx of foreign luxuries and fashions into Italy. Roman society and literature responded to this influx ambiguously, but the overall tone was one of disapproval. The association of luxury with women, attested dramatically at the rescinding of the lex Oppia, was firmly established in erotic literature by the latter part of the first century B.C. Latin Love Elegy provides an opportunity for studying the response of a particular genre to the phenomenon of luxury in an erotic context.

After a general introduction to the role of luxury in the economic life of Republican Rome, the literary response to luxury is investigated with special emphasis on erotic literature. Following this, the elegies of Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid are analysed sequentially and in detail with respect to how these poems treat luxury.

It is found that luxury in Latin Love Elegy retains the ambiguity associated with it outside erotic literature, and functions as a rhetorical tool in the process of seduction. The attitude of the elegiac persona to luxury sheds light on the fictional lover, and demonstrates how the elegists accommodate in their poetry traditional and contemporary views of a real phenomenon.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

What is laid to the Charge of Luxury besides, is, that it increases Avarice and Rapine: And where they are reigning Vices, Offices of the greatest Trust are bought and sold; the Ministers that should serve the Publick, both great and small, corrupted, and the Countries every Moment in danger of being betray'd to the highest Bidders: And lastly, that it effeminates and enervates the People, by which the Nations become an easy Prey to the first Invaders.

Bernard Mandeville, Fable of the Bees: Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits (ed. F.B. Kaye, 1924 Oxford Vol. 1 p. 115)

Open any popular novel with a Roman setting, watch any screen or television fictionalising of the Roman World, and you will notice that invariably some reference is made to the luxurious behaviour of the Romans. Usually there are some "good" Romans to be found as well, men who are honest, efficient, and courageous. This reading of the Romans is not necessarily anachronistic. Throughout their cultural history, Europeans have tended to view the Romans as exemplifying two extremes: absolute virtue and absolute dissoluteness. Sometimes people have chosen to emphasise one trait to the exclusion of the other, but generally the Romans are conceived of as embodying a paradox typical of a powerful yet affluent civilisation. The pattern is a classic one, and was construed in the same manner by the Romans themselves: a courageous and rustic people acquire an empire, and are eventually corrupted by their affluence.

Since luxury is such an essential facet of Roman civilisation as we understand it, a close analysis of its occurrence in all Latin literature would be justified. An investigation on this scale would be beyond the scope of the present dissertation, but it will be a valuable exercise to examine the theme of luxury in a restricted body of literature. A convenient candidate for such an analysis is Latin Love Elegy. Even a cursory perusal of the poems of Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid leaves the reader with the impression that luxury is a preoccupation of the elegists. This is hardly remarkable, since it is well known that by the Age of Augustus, the time of the elegists, Rome had absorbed a good deal of Hellenistic material culture, and in addition, as I shall show, there was a venerable tradition of the covetousness of certain types of women in love affairs. Given these two circumstances, Latin Love Elegy, being a relatively self-contained corpus, might be expected to yield interesting information on the manner in which a particular category of literature, with specific generic requirements, treats luxury as a literary theme.

"The ancient economy," writes one scholar, "is an academic battleground"<sup>1</sup>. I am unwilling to involve myself in this debate but some appreciation of the Roman economic system in the two centuries before Christ is required. My focus will be on the trade in luxuries and various social and cultural reactions to the phenomenon of luxury. Of particular importance will be Roman reaction to the demand, appropriation, and utilisation of luxury by women, a topic which has no small significance for a study of luxury in Latin Love Elegy.

### Foreign Luxury in the Economic Life of Republican Rome

Despite the conflicting perceptions of the economic reality behind the Roman world, I think it safe to assert that in macrocosm the Roman Empire never ceased to rest upon a subsistence economy. By this I mean that the majority of people in the Empire were subsistence farmers.<sup>2</sup> On the whole, many regions within the Empire probably remained self-sufficient for the bulk of their raw-materials, foodstuffs, and basic utensils, or, at the most, traditional and relatively simple trade-systems supplied resources that might have been lacking. One should, however, recognise at the outset that this does not represent the whole picture. Undeniably, various urban centres, such as Antioch, Alexandria, and Rome, did display features characteristic of more complex economic systems. Demographic factors seem to be the most obvious causes behind the adaptation, development, and expansion of these trading-systems. Accumulation of larger populations in a spatially and ecologically restricted environment required them to organise the importation of raw materials, which in turn obliged or stimulated regions blessed with these materials to exploit and export them. Sometimes redistribution of these materials by the urban centre was a feature of the system. This basic model of development seems to work for many of the urban centres that existed in the Ancient World, although the problem remains for many as to whether population growth was a cause or an effect of this development. Perhaps it was both, a self-perpetuating dynamic which accounts for the increase in the populations of so many of



these early cities.

Essential goods, such as food, water, and building materials, always remained a priority for importation in a city as large as Rome. This can be seen most prominently in the organisation that went into the grain supply, a perpetual concern, the political and social importance of which was paramount. Failure to secure such a supply could lead to a crisis for the entire fabric of the Roman state. But, however important basic foods and materials were for the continued maintenance of the res publica and the status of its ruling families, they were frequently not the imported goods most required or valued by the elite for their own consumption. From about the middle of the third century B.C., the Roman elite were in a position to afford items long established as "luxuries" by the elites of other societies, and, as far as can be seen, gradually established more demand for these articles and offered a market for them. Acquisition of luxurious items took two basic forms: outright confiscation under conditions of expansion, war, and conquest,<sup>3</sup> and adopting, modifying, and developing pre-existing trading-systems that trafficked in such items.

Defining "luxury" or "a luxury" is not straightforward. Generally it will be what a respected or favoured sector of a population considers a luxury, i.e. that which is desirable, yet hard to obtain and therefore practically always expensive and often exotic; that which is not necessary for survival, even unnecessary for a life of comfort, but enhances one's lifestyle

and frequently one's prestige. Possession or use of luxuries by an individual communicates something about that individual to other members of his society.<sup>4</sup> But that is only one facet of luxury. There remains, in the Roman understanding of the phenomenon, a pejorative sense. Luxury, as construed by the Roman moralising tradition (a tradition which cuts across generic boundaries in literature), presented one of the most complex issues in Roman cultural experience. Complex, in that ostensibly there was no issue: luxury was evil, and that was all there was to it. But in practice, items, materials, lifestyles deemed luxurious were part of the every-day experience of Romans of any material substance.

In Roman society a man's dignitas depended essentially on birth, conduct, and wealth. This last element was as fundamental as the other two, and, despite our ignorance as to the property qualifications required of members of the senatorial or equestrian classes in the earlier Republic, we can assume that some sort of census or account of a man's substance was obligatory.<sup>5</sup> Traditionally, a man's "worth" was linked to some extent to his material substance. The equation seems to have enjoyed an enduring existence. Even where sophisticated intellectual systems offered non-material alternatives, in practice "wealth" and "worth" were often associated, as Horace's interlocutor asserts:

"nil satis est" inquit, "quia tanti quantum habeas sis".

Sat. 1.1.62

Where one's status is perceived to depend significantly on the amount of property one owns, it is perhaps inevitable that any opportunity for displaying that wealth will be exploited. Substance was linked traditionally with land and immovable property. Luxurious goods offered a more decorative means of displaying surplus, but were a relatively recent, and foreign, import. Hence the underlying hypocrisy in Roman assessments of the "worthiness" of luxurious wealth.

The Romans were not the first to condemn luxury. To a large extent their native rejection of it found incidental support in attitudes to pleasure which they had inherited from long-standing Greek didactic and intellectual traditions. The Greeks had made a distinction between creditable and discreditable expenditure, and usually looked with disfavour upon a man who squandered his livelihood on self-gratifying entertainments such as gambling and good food.<sup>6</sup> Luxury was associated with the body, with pleasure (voluptas, ἡδονή), and such impulses were inferior to the practices that involved the mind. Posidonius, to name but one Greek philosopher whose influence in Rome was considerable, expressed the idea that luxurious living corrupted the individual in a number of ways.<sup>7</sup> The Romans contributed to the idea of the undesirability of luxury in other ways. It was perceived as being an exotic import<sup>8</sup> and therefore unRoman, inimical to the integrity and fabric of the Roman character. Luxury was something that interfered with the proper function of the Roman system of values: e.g. pietas, fides, honor, auctoritas, gravitas, severitas, something that prevented proper

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observation of the conduct expected of a Roman senator or eques.  
The practice of luxury presupposed otium of a negative type,  
inertia in the worst possible sense.

Luxury, in the Roman view, was almost a disease that infected individuals, preying on and encouraging one of the basest elements in the human spirit, avaritia. But, like many diseases, it had social implications. It changed the manner in which people behaved towards others in their community. Thus luxury had both a private and public aspect: private in that individuals served as its consumers, public in that the urbs or civitas amounted to the sum of those consumers. If allowed to escalate uncontrolled, it could become institutionalised, a normal and accepted mode of behaviour.<sup>10</sup> It is in these terms particularly that writers in the Roman moralising tradition believed luxury's dissemination was to be feared.

Hence the ambivalence towards luxury that occurs so frequently in literary texts of the late Republic and early Empire.<sup>11</sup> Wealth was a necessary asset if an individual was to function in the state, but extravagant expenditure and display were deemed immoral. Often the deciding factor is not having or using luxuries in themselves, but the way one possesses or exploits them. Once again, Greek intellectualism seems to have played a supporting role in establishing this compromise. It is perhaps significant that Stoicism became increasingly popular in Rome in the first centuries B.C. and A.D. Among the advantages of such a philosophical creed was its promotion of the concept of material wealth as indifferens.<sup>12</sup> Property and wealth were justified if utilised on the ὡς μὴ principle. Stoicism presented a

convenient resolution of the Roman moral dilemma.

Consequently, the definition of what does and does not constitute luxury in the Roman view appears on the whole to be a rhetorical one. The charge of luxury was dependent on the circumstances. Luxury was in the eye of the beholder - if one saw it, it was obvious, but equally easy to ignore if one so wished. Luxury could also be refined, if it were rhetorically expedient, into something less offensive like urbanity or elegance (urbanitas, elegantia, munditia, lautitia). Luxury was always relative, never an absolute, no matter how sincere the castigations of the Roman moralists appear to be. As often in antiquity, and in any other age for that matter, there was an appreciable disparity between what was said and what was actually done.

Although the precise details of what constitutes luxury are difficult to determine, the Romans from a relatively early stage seem to have confidently identified its increasing manifestation. The Roman moralising tradition isolated specific dates or occurrences as the points at which luxury as a practice entered the City. These instances tend to be crammed into the second century B.C., the better to maintain an unsullied moral reputation for the "best" years of the Republic while confining deterioration in ethical standards to more recent years.

Rome may have been something of a commercial backwater,<sup>13</sup> especially after the expulsion of her kings, but it would be naive to assume that the Early Republic was a complete stranger

to the delicacies offered by merchants operating in the western Mediterranean. The significance of the political and commercial treaty with Carthage in 509/508 B.C. (Polyb. 3.22.12-13) may be in doubt, but the Twelve Tables of the Decemviri (c. 443 B.C.) show clear evidence of the existence of costly items at Rome, and, simultaneously, evidence for some sort of restriction against the conspicuous use of these items. At funerals, mourners were restrained from displaying too much purple, and gold jewellery or ornamentation was expressly forbidden to accompany<sup>14</sup> the corpse.

Rome's commercial standing was significantly altered by her aggressive expansion, which begins to be felt internationally in the latter half of the fourth century B.C. There can be little doubt that the City's increased wealth was a simple result of violent appropriation of other communities' property, particularly that of the Greek states of the southern Italian peninsula and Sicily. Potentially disastrous to Rome strategically and fiscally, the First and Second Punic Wars in fact stimulated the Roman economy and made rich citizens considerably richer. Aside from the praeda which accrued to individuals amongst the military, the bulk of which must have comprised portable valuables, these two wars resulted in Rome's<sup>15</sup> being paid enormous indemnities in gold and silver. Such an influx of wealth must, in turn, have encouraged an escalation in<sup>16</sup> expenditure on consumables and other valued acquisitions.

Expansion into the eastern Mediterranean in the second century B.C. compounded this trend. The actions of Aemilius Paullus with

regard to the Macedonian treasure were justified in antiquity by the restraint he displayed in not succumbing to personal greed. However laudable his behaviour, he was nonetheless responsible for boosting the wealth and consumerism of his native city.<sup>17</sup> The sacking of Carthage and Corinth had the same effect.<sup>18</sup> The opportunities for conquest seemed unlimited. Even barbarian peoples, or nations considered relatively unsophisticated, offered important natural resources (agricultural territory, animal products, mining etc.) and astonishing hoards of precious metals.<sup>19</sup>

Concomitant with Rome's military expansion was her commercial development. I shall avoid discussion of the difficult issue of the extent to which patricians were directly or indirectly involved in such economic activities. It is well known, however, that people of Italian provenance, a portion of them Roman citizens, were increasingly engaged in trade from at least the third century B.C. onwards.<sup>20</sup> Building activity can, with some confidence, be linked with the development of sea-borne commerce. The emporium and porticus Aemilia (for storage of goods) were constructed south of the Aventine between 192 B.C. and 174 B.C. Resident Italian negotiatores are attested from Delos from 167 B.C. onwards, and the port of Puteoli grows in importance from 146 B.C.<sup>21</sup> Another indicator of the rise in inter-regional trade is the number of shipwrecks that fall into the period from 220 B.C. to A.D. 200,<sup>22</sup> assuming that the number of wrecks discovered in some way correlates with an intensification in sea-borne commerce.

Hence there were two means by which the Romans acquired luxurious articles: warfare, or some form of negotium in foreign countries or provinces, and importation. It was a commonplace notion that administrative negotium in the provinces offered opportunities for enrichment, and there may be a good explanation as to why<sup>23</sup> governors tended to acquire luxurious moveables in particular.

The precise details of the mechanics of luxurious commerce seem to be poorly understood, however, or at least they have not received attention in works which treat commerce and trade in the Roman Empire generally.<sup>24</sup> Many luxuries offered high financial returns on relatively low bulk, hence the attraction to merchants. Fine garments and textiles, perfume, and trinkets would not require an inordinate amount of space. Garnsey and Saller make the attractive suggestion that many of these commodities could have entered Italy with ships whose main<sup>25</sup> freight consisted of basic raw materials. In addition to this, since a great deal of the trade was in the hands of a multitude of private operators, there were probably as many avenues to luxury as there were ships to carry it.

Luxury made an impact on virtually all facets of Roman life. The life-style of the Republican aristocracy seems to have altered considerably as opportunities to explore new sensations and experiences became available. Generally the scale upon which members of this class could indulge themselves was extended: homes and villas, gardens, furniture, clothing and ornament, transport, wine and cuisine are just some of the material things that luxury would have affected. Aside from this, there were



important social, cultural, and even political ramifications from the encroachment of luxury. This sudden variety meant that fashions could now be established and maintained.

The time-honoured complaint that the mature have against the behaviour of the young was given fresh impetus. In the eyes of moralists, it was especially the younger members of Roman society who allowed luxury to dissuade them from observing the manly virtues demanded by the mos maiorum.<sup>26</sup> The generation gap was perceived as widening. This interpretation was obviously simplistic. To a large extent the community as a whole was responsible for the promotion and utilisation of exotic habits and styles. Estimable figures, Scipio for example, endorsed the importing of much Hellenic culture.

The iuventus of Rome were all men of military age, an elite body which was being prepared for the responsibilities of higher offices. Rome's military entanglements during the third and second centuries B.C. had exposed these men to the material delights enjoyed by sophisticated nations. The institution of the triumph had effectively advertised these goods to the rest of the community as praeda which conferred honour and status. Paradoxically, military virtus had been associated with the ostentation of luxurious booty.<sup>27</sup> The experiences of the Roman iuventus had resulted in a change of attitude as to how life could be lived. This alteration brought with it a state of mind that was interpreted by ancient critics as impudence. The youth appeared to ape the behaviour of the scurrae mimici (professional

entertainers). Wealthy, privileged and sophisticated, their extravagance and audacity were difficult to curtail.<sup>28</sup> This perception of the youth of Rome was to persist into the first century B.C. Cicero identifies the iuventus delicata as a discernible group.<sup>29</sup> By the Augustan age,<sup>30</sup> Rome was heavily Hellenised, a cosmopolitan centre.

### Literary Responses to Luxury

Contemporary literary response to luxury in the third and second centuries B.C. is now fragmentary. With early Roman comedy, the difficulty lies in establishing what proportion of the comment is derived from attitudes to τρυφή<sup>31</sup> expressed by the Greek models, and what is strictly native. "Ferentinatis populus res Graecas studet" wrote Titinius, probably a contemporary of Terence's (Psaltria sive Ferentinatis fr. 1, Ribbeck p. 172). The poet may have been exaggerating the influence of Greek habits on a small Latium town like Ferentinum, but, for the joke to work, there must have been at least a kernel of truth in it. Plautus provides a fairly consistent picture of the hellenisation of Roman habits. The verb pergraecari connotes a wide range of unrestrained behaviour,<sup>32</sup> mainly consisting of indulging the appetites and senses. Often one is given the impression of a frenzied surrender to the pleasures of the flesh, a wasteful expenditure of energy where no one experience is sufficient to satisfy. The tone of excess is evoked most effectively by the way Plautus strings together lists of words, communicating the lust for new sensations, the desire to indulge all possible organs of sense at once:

dies noctesque bibite, pergraecamini,  
amicas emite, liberate: pascite  
parasitos: opsonate pollucibiliter.

Most. 22-24

lubet potare, amare, scorta ducere

Most. 36

Tu tibi istos habeas turtures, piscis, avis,  
sine me aliato fungi fortunas meas

Most. 46-47

The atmosphere is comic rather than seriously critical, especially since these lines are spoken between slaves. However, the need to condemn luxury on both material and moral grounds is felt even here:

hoccine boni esse officium servi existumas  
ut eri sui corrumpat et rem et filium?

Most. 27-28

More material can be found in Terence (e.g. Heaut. Tim. 945-46), and Lucilius (e.g. 12-17, 132M), but sustained invectives against luxury are difficult to come by.

The body of literature available from the first century B.C. and later is more complete. Authors from this period write not only about the reprehensible indulgences of their own day, but seek to account for and describe the growth of luxury by reference to the past. It would seem that once Roman historiography achieves maturity in writers like Sallust and Livy, the degeneration of the national virtus under the infiltration of exotic luxury is a

topos which becomes indispensable. Whatever claims such a paradigm might have had for being a scientific hypothesis to account for the deterioration of states, the principal concern of Roman historiographers was the rhetorical material they could extract from it. The concrete symbols of luxury, often present in the overtones of semi-assimilated Greek words, were things to be savoured, oozing with suggestiveness of the immoral, dangerously palatable on the tongue, perniciously seductive to the ear.<sup>33</sup>

Orators, poets and historiographers may have engaged in rhetorical pyrotechnics in their castigation of luxury in individuals and the state, but it is also a fact that Rome saw a considerable amount of legislation against "immoral" behaviour and material ostentation.<sup>34</sup> Repeated legislation on a particular issue is a sure sign that a contrary practice is flourishing. It is interesting to note that one of the earliest and most memorable sumptuary laws was passed during the Second Punic War and was specifically aimed at restricting the ostentatious display of luxuries by women.<sup>35</sup> The lex had been passed originally by C. Oppius (tribunus plebis) "...in medio ardore Punici belli" (Liv. 34.1.3); Livy paraphrases its content thus:

...ne qua mulier plus semunciam auri haberet neu vestimento versicolori uteretur neu iuncto vehiculo in urbe oppidove aut proprius inde mille passus nisi sacrorum publicorum causa veheretur.

(34.1.3 Weissenborn-Müller)

The historical circumstances of this law seem to provide grounds for an unproblematic interpretation. Rome was under severe economic stress during the Second Punic War.<sup>36</sup> But, as Culham points out, the law seems to stress prohibition of the use of luxuries, not so much the mere possession of them, making less secure the theory that the lex Oppia was designed to appropriate private property, or restrict private expenditure.<sup>37</sup> The sense of haberet<sup>38</sup> in the text is probably "wear" rather than "possess". Culham goes on to suggest that it was the display of wealth that was offensive: men could exploit women by competing with each other indirectly through them; thus men would not behave in a manner that would render them liable to the charge of being addicted to luxury themselves.<sup>39</sup> Competition of this nature is undesirable at times of economic or strategic crisis. Culham suggests that other legislation should be seen in the same context: Cato's taxation of certain luxuries (including women's) when he was censor in 184 B.C. (Liv. 39.44.1-3, Plut. Cato. 18.2), the leges Orchia and Fannia (181 B.C., 161 B.C.) to reduce the competitive nature of dinner parties and other home entertainments, and the leges Voconia and Furia.<sup>40</sup> If she is correct about the lex Oppia, then Livy's account has been influenced by prevalent attitudes of his own day towards luxuria, and possibly by the literary/historiographical topos of sumptuary law as the attempt by certain virtuous individuals to stay the onslaught of luxus.

What is particularly interesting about the rescinding of the lex Oppia is the pressure applied by women on the community in support of the abrogatio of the law. Though their actions were

probably within the bounds of Roman communal practice,<sup>41</sup> the besieging of the houses of esteemed patricians suspected of blocking the abrogation was unusual and extreme,<sup>42</sup> especially since it was carried out by women. For the facts we are reliant on later male sources. However, the depiction of the female response to a curtailment of their ostentatious display of luxury objects informs us that Roman males considered women prone to value them and prepared to go to unreasonable lengths to retain the right to advertise them.

In Livy's account of the lex Oppia episode Valerius attempts to justify allowing women to adorn themselves and exploit luxuries:

non magistratus nec sacerdotia nec triumphi nec insignia  
nec dona aut spolia bellica iis contingere possunt; munditiae et  
ornatus et cultus, haec feminarum insignia sunt, his gaudent et  
gloriantur, hunc mundum muliebrem appellarunt maiores nostri.

(Livy 34.7 8-9 Weissenborn-Müller)

One must remember that the text above is a Livian reconstruction of what Valerius might have said in favour of abolishing the Lex Oppia, and so it is safe to assume that the historian has composed an argument that is rhetorically plausible to his own contemporary readership. In other words, one can be justified in supposing that Valerius is giving articulation to an idea that would be credible for a Roman reader in the Augustan Age, the same person who might have read Latin Love Elegy.

The passage from Livy quoted above reflects a fundamentally patriarchal view of what constitutes status. Women are uncritically excluded from any male means of displaying status and have to resort to methods that do not connote administrative, ritualistic or military worth. In other words, women have no legitimate way of showing their status in the community (unless one includes the stola that was the mark of a matrona). Their hierarchical system is relegated to a trivial level by the very nature of the symbols they employ to demonstrate that hierarchy. Luxuries on one's person have no significance for the res publica, unless they are confined to traditional symbols such as a purple stripe or a gold ring, in which case they can no longer be classified as luxuries, but functional decorations.

But since it is the most visible feature distinguishing women from each other, the argument runs that the display of luxury by those who have it is extremely important to women. Thus, Livy presents two conflicting propositions, one by Cato (34.2-4) the other by Valerius (34.5-7), which, ironically, both depict women as beings for whom luxurious goods are in great demand. It is taken for granted that women are more prone than men to use (and abuse) luxury, since Roman society dictates that this form of external ornament alone signifies hierarchy amongst the female sex and instructs individuals as to how they are to regard one another.

The Livian treatment of the rescinding of the lex Oppia is valuable because it reflects an Augustan view of the covetousness of women generally, a view which the elegiac poets make full use

of when constructing the characters and motives of their girlfriends.

### Eros and Luxury

That sex usually costs money is an assumption never seriously questioned in Antiquity:

ἔϊτ' οὐ μέγιστός ἐστι τῶν θεῶν Ἔρως  
καὶ τιμιώτατός γε τῶν πάντων πολὺ;  
οὐδεὶς γὰρ οὕτως ἐστὶ φειδωλὸς σφόδρα  
ἄνθρωπος οὐδ' οὕτως ἀκριβὴς τοὺς τρόπους  
ὅς οὐχὶ τούτῳ μερίδα τῷ θεῷ νέμει  
τῆς οὐσίας...

Menander fr. 198.1-6 (Koerte & Thierfelder II p. 78)

Early in Latin amatory contexts we find reference to the expenditure of the lover's resources in his pursuit of the loved one. In comedy young men waste their livelihood and inheritance on methods to gain success in love. Sex and money become inseparable: you cannot have one without spending the other in some form or another. The exchange need not be as blatant as paying money directly for sexual favours. In fact, the erotic mode of literature demands that, for aesthetic purposes, the woman is not constituted as a prostitute. If it is as simple to satisfy one's desire as it is to buy a loaf of bread, the erotic relationship makes no sense in the terms by which we define eros.



This can be demonstrated by Horace's second satire which deals unsentimentally with sex. Three basic categories of women are isolated as potential partners in sexual liaisons: married women, freedwomen, and slaves / cheap prostitutes. Horace's satiric persona rejects adultery and the rather expensive affairs with freedwomen in favour of that which is convenient and free,

...tument tibi cum inguina, num si  
ancilla aut verna est praesto puer, impetus in quem  
continuo fiat, malis tentigine rumpi?  
non ego: namque parabilem amo venerem facilemque.

(Sat. 1.2.116-119)

But sex of this nature hardly satisfies the criteria of eros. Eros is an aberrant psychological state, a type of mania that produces strange behaviour in the lover. Essentially, eros is concerned with desire that is unsatisfied. The man as lover is the pursuer, and by convention the object of eros flees. Just as the roles of the partners in the erotic relationship are diametrically opposed, so their views of what eros is and what it requires of them will also differ. The lover aims to seduce, the loved one strives to avoid seduction and yet encourage the continuance of the lover's efforts in order to keep the process of eros going.

An object is desired as long as it is unattainable. Once an object has been acquired and possessed, the desire for it can, strictly speaking, no longer continue to exist, and then Love can

no longer be classified as eros, but some other form of affection. Most Latin love poetry has eros as its motivation despite the fact that the love elegists in some of their poems seek to elevate the kind of love they feel to a more permanent and reliable level. The elegiac persona's attempt to make eros more than it actually is, to preserve the excitement of eros and yet combine with it the security of marital affection, is an enterprise so obviously doomed to fail, within the convention, as to be deliberately ironic on the poet's part.

If we return to Horace Sat. 1.2, we can see that the satirist's rational advice deliberately explodes the erotic construct. Eros exists more in the mind than anywhere else. Horace says as much:

si interdicta petes, vallo circumdata<sup>†</sup> nam te  
hoc facit insanum... (96-97)

haec ubi supposuit dextro corpus mihi laevum  
Ilia et Egeria est: do nomen quodlibet illi...

(125-126)

Consequently, Horace's solution to the necessity for sexual gratification is blatantly anti-erotic since the danger of the chase and / or the costliness of the enterprise are what give eros its particular flavour. When viewed from without its own literary system, eros appears ridiculous.<sup>44</sup>

The loved one must appear to have freedom of choice, or the ability to refuse her would-be seducer. Without this freedom in

the loved one, the lover would not have to seduce. Therefore, "payment" for sex obtained or sex expected usually takes more discreet forms. This is effected in the bestowal of gifts of luxuries conventionally valued by women: jewellery, perfume, garments. The munus masks the commercial aspect of the transaction, but the result for the purse of the lover is indistinguishable.

Lucretius gives a clear account of what a lover is expected to provide his loved one with. This argument against love is illustrated with examples of the way it undermines the lover's substance:

Adde quod absumunt viris pereuntque labore,  
adde quod alterius sub nutu degitur aetas.  
labitur interea res et Babylonica fiunt,  
languent officia atque aegrotat fama vacillans.  
†unguenta† et pulchra in pedibus Sicyonia rident 1125  
scilicet et grandes viridi cum luce zmaragdi  
auro includuntur teriturque thalassina vestis  
assidue et Veneris sudorem exercita potat.  
et bene parta patrum fiunt anademata, mitrae,  
interdum in pallam atque Alidensia Ciaeque vertunt. 1130  
eximia veste et victu convivia, ludi,  
pocula crebra, unguenta coronae sorta parantur,  
nequiquam, quoniam medio de fonte leporum  
surgit amari aliquid quod in ipsis floribus angat,

aut cum conscius ipse animus se forte remordet etc...

(Lucr. DRN. 4.1121-1135)

Lucretius' remarks are grounded in a specific philosophical objection to the experience of eros and its evil consequences. However, he also exploits deep-rooted Roman distrust of expenditure on luxurious consumables. It is assumed that love will play havoc with the lover's material resources and turn them into superfluous gifts (line 1123). Civic and private duties are neglected (line 1124). The man's property literally becomes (fiunt line 1123) pointless luxury from which no material gain is forthcoming. The items bought are equipment necessary for the life of love. Coverlets, perfume, shoes, emeralds, and fine clothing are adornments to satisfy the whims of the mistress and facilitate her seduction by the lover. Lucretius compounds the luxuriousness and wastefulness of these items by emphasising their foreignness, either with an adjective of provenance (Babylonica 1123, Sicyonia 1125), or with a Greek word (zmaragdi 1126, thalassina vestis 1127, anademata, mitrae 1129).

Catullus, the most important extant love poet before the elegists, rarely introduces luxury as a theme in his erotic verse. In poem 45, it is a man (Septimius) who prefers one woman to any country:

unam Septimius misellus Acmen

mavult quam Syrias Britanniasque

(Cat. 45.21-22)

where Syrias Britanniasque communicate by metonymy the wealth

and praeda to be got from those lands. In other words, Septimius' choice entails a life of erotic otium with uncertain success, over a life of negotium with obvious material benefits. In another poem (Cat. 69), Catullus advises Rufus that all the luxurious gifts in the world will not help him to win a girl's affections because he has a dreadful body-odour.

Lesbia, on the other hand, is never represented as demanding gifts of this sort. Possibly, the absence of luxury in Catullus' poems about Lesbia is due to her being a matrona. Reference to luxurious gifts in connection with her would be misleading and inappropriate if we remember Horace Sat. 1.2.37-46, where, amidst the perils involved in acquiring access to a matrona, we discover no allusion to money or gifts. The only expense mentioned is the fine an adulterer might have to pay if caught (1.2.43).

The elegists are quite different from Catullus in this regard. Their mistresses are much vaguer figures. In many respects they are literary creations, an amalgamation of traditional and contemporary motifs.<sup>45</sup> The women of Latin Love Elegy are neither matronae nor meretrices, but combine the covetousness of the freedwomen and the inaccessibility of the matronae in Horace Sat. 1.2. The elegists are careful to avoid the vocabulary of prostitution when speaking of transactions between themselves and their mistresses. A word like nummus is not found in Love Elegy,<sup>46</sup> and a figure in hard cash would be an abomination.

In the following chapters I shall examine the manner in which Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid treat luxury as an element already

inherent in the erotic literary tradition. This will be particularly interesting, given the Roman prejudice against luxury outlined above and the elegists' refusal to debase the erotic construct by admitting the need to pay for sex as one would pay for a scortum. The use of luxury as a rhetorical tool in the poems deserves special attention. Ultimately one must never forget that the Life of Love itself was regarded by most Romans as intrinsically luxurious, an example of bad otium.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1) Hopkins, K. in Garnsey, P., Hopkins, K., and Whittaker, C.R. (1983) p. ix.

2) Cf. Hopkins, K. (1980) JRS 70: 104, who thinks that despite the "sophisticated veneer", about 80%-90% of the population of the Roman Empire were peasants and self-supporting; even R. Duncan-Jones (1974) pp. 6-7, who asserts that the economy of the Principate was a money economy, has to admit that it is possible that money was less pervasive in the countryside than in the towns.

3) The Roman concept of praeda held that it was legal for a soldier to appropriate for his private use whatever enemy property he chose so long as it was movable. Immovables, i.e. land, buildings etc., accrued to the state, while the general took human captives in trust for the state. See R. M. Ogilvie's note (1965) pp. 346-47 on Livy 2.42.1; he cites Pomponius Dig. 49.15.20.1 and Gaius Dig. 41.1.5.7; see also PW xxii.1.1200 ff. (Vogel).

4) "External trade brings prestige artifacts which confer status on those individuals controlling the supply. A prominent hierarchy can thus emerge in what was formerly only a partly stratified society", Renfrew, C. (1975) p. 33; see also Th. Veblen (1899, repr. 1934) p. 72, "The consumption of luxuries, in the true sense, is a consumption directed to the comfort of the consumer himself, and is, therefore, a mark of the master", and p. 74, "Since the consumption of these more excellent goods is an evidence of wealth, it becomes honorific; and conversely, the

failure to consume in due quantity and quality becomes a mark of inferiority and demerit",

5) See Nicolet, C. (1984) pp. 91-93. Augustus seems to have formalised property qualifications for the senatorial ordo. Nicolet admits that Roman society displayed "plutocratic tendencies" (op. cit. p. 94).

6) See Dover, K. J. (1974) pp. 175, 179. As early as Anacreon (fr. 82 Gentili) luxurious extravagance in an individual was established as an element in invective, here with overtones of effeminacy:

νῦν δ' ἐπιβαίνει σκτινέων χρύσεα φορέων καθέρματα  
πάις Κύκης καὶ σκιαδίσκην ἐλεφαντίνην φορέει  
γυναιξὶν αὐτως.

(lines 11-12)

7) Cf. Posidonius fr.58 (Edelstein, L. and Kidd, I.G. (edd.) 1972. p. 80) of Ptolemy VII (VIII), διὰ δὲ τρυφὴν διέφθαρτο τὸ σῶμα ὑπὸ παχύτητος καὶ γαστρὸς μεγέθους, ἣν δυσπερίληπτον εἶναι συνέβαινεν· ἐφ' ἧς χιτωνίσκον ἐνδεδυκὼς ποδῆρην μέχρι τῶν καρπῶν χειρίδας ἔχοντα περιήει· προήει δὲ οὐδέποτε πεζός, εἰ μὴ διὰ Σκιπίωνα. and fr.59 (ibid.) on Damophilus, τρυφῆς οὖν δοῦλος ἦν καὶ κακουργίας κτλ...

Celsus assumes that luxury can exacerbate ill-health, cf. de Med pr. 4.

Posidonius also contributed to the mythology of the pristine virtue of ancient Roman life, ... οἱ σφόδρα εὐκκισούμενοι τοῖς βίοις ἦγον τοὺς υἱοὺς ὕδωρ μὲν ὡς τὸ πολὺ πίνοντας, ἐσθίωντας δ' ὅτι ἂν τύχη κτλ...

(fr. 267 Edelstein and Kidd p. 235)



8) Examples of luxury as an exotic and imported phenomenon:

"non omnes possunt olere unguenta exotica", Plautus Most. 41

"ibi (i.e. Asia) primum insuevit exercitus populi Romani amare potare etc...", Sallust Catiline 11.6

"...nec in quam civitatem tam serae avaritia luxuriaque immigraverint", and "...per luxum atque libidinem pereundi perdendique omnia invexere", Livy Praef. 11, 12

"luxuriae enim peregrinae origo ab exercitu Asiatico invecta in urbem est", Livy 39.6.7 (Weissenborn and Heraeus)

"...peregrinis...muneribus", Prop. 1.2.4

9) For a blend of Roman values and Greek philosophising cf. Cic. de Off. 1.106 (Atzert): "atque etiam, si considerare volemus, quae sit in natura nostra excellentia et dignitas, intellegemus, quam sit turpe diffluere luxuria et delicate ac molliter vivere, quamque honestum parce, continenter, severe, sobrie."

10) See Fraenkel (1957) p. 212; cf. Posidonius on Syrian cities (fr. 62a Edelstein and Kidd), where an entire society maintains a corrupt way of life: ... τοῖς μὲν γυμνασίοις ὡς βαλανείοις χρώμενοι, ἐλειφόμενοι [δ'] ἐλαίῳ πολυτελεῖ καὶ μύροις, τοῖς δὲ γραμματείοις — οὕτως γὰρ ἐκάλουν τὰ κοινὰ τῶν συνδείπνων — ὡς [ἐν] οἰκητηρίοις ἐνδιατῶμενοι καὶ τὸ πλεῖον <μέρος> τῆς ἡμέρας γαστριζόμενοι ἐν αὐτοῖς οἴνοις καὶ βρώμασιν, ὥστε καὶ προσαποφέρειν πολλά, καὶ κατακυλούμενοι πρὸς χελωνίδος πολυκρότου ψόφον, ὥστε τὰς πόλεις ὅλας τοιούτοις κελεύδοις συνηχεῖσθαι.

Also cf. the traditional view of ancient Sybaris (Otto, A. 1890, repr. 1971 p. 338, s.v. Sybaris) and Phylarchus fr.81 F45 (Jacoby

p. 176 Vol.2)

11) One example should suffice as an illustration. Horace allows Ofellus to extol the virtues of simple fare and castigate luxurious gastronomic practices (Sat. 2.2), he listens with obvious irony to Catus' account of the ratio saporum (Sat. 2.4), he claims his own meals are frugal yet satisfying (Sat. 1.6.112-118, 2.6.63-64, and cf. the clear allusion to himself again at 2.6.83-89); yet he has Fundanius (a sympathetic voice in the Satires) comment that the luxurious delicacies served by the freedman Nasidienus were appetising in themselves but spoiled by the host's behaviour,

...deinde secuti

mazonomo pueri magno discerpta ferentes  
membra gruis sparsi sale multo, non sine farre,  
pinguibus et ficis pastum iecur anseris albae,  
et leporum avulsos, et multo suavius, armos,  
quam si cum lumbis quis edit; tum pectore adusto  
vidimus et merulas poni et sine clune palumbes,  
suavis res, si non causas narraret earum et  
naturas dominus...

Sat. 2.8.85-93

12) Cicero recognises that material goods are necessary for human and communal maintenance, but advises that one adopt a disdainful attitude to those material goods:

reliquis autem tribus virtutibus necessitates propositae

sunt ad eas res parandas tuendasque, quibus actio vitae continetur, ut et societas hominum coniunctioque servetur et animi excellentia magnitudoque cum in augendis opibus utilitatibusque et sibi et suis comparandis, tum multo magis in his ipsis despiciendis eluceat. (de Off. 1.17 Atzert)

His statements put the Roman view of this compromise most succinctly.

13) In the Roman view, even the early kings were frugal and unacquainted with comforts. Romulus' casa was still to be seen in the time of Augustus; cf. Calpurnius Piso, "eundem Romulum dicunt ad cenam vocatum ibi non multum bibisse, quia postridie negotium haberet. ei dicunt: 'Romule, si istud omnes homines faciant, vinum vilius sit.' his respondit: 'Immo vero carum, si quantum quisque volet, bibat, nam ego bibi quantum volui'", fr.8 Peter, H. 1914. HRR Vol. 1, p. 123, and Plin. NH 14.88 (Mayhoff), "Romulum lacte, non vino, libasse indicio sunt sacra ab eo instituta, quae hodie custodiunt morem. Numae regis Postumia lex est: Vino rogam ne respargito. quod sanxisse illum propter inopiam rei nemo dubitet." On the market offered by royal courts for luxurious goods see Frank, T. (1933) pp. 4-5.

14) Tabula X.3 "extenuato igitur sumptu tribus reciniis et tunica purpurae et decem tibicinibus tollit etiam lamentationem." X.8 "...neve aurum addito. at cui auro dentes iuncti escunt."

15) Eg. the payment by Carthage of 1200 talents along with the surrender of Sardinia (Polyb. 1.88.12, 3.10); according to Livy,

Rome acquired in excess of 250 million silver denarii in indemnities and booty between 200 B.C. and 167 B.C. (Sherwin-White, A.N. 1984 p. 15).

16) Astin, A.E. (1990) Latomus 49: 30.

17) On the restraint of Aemilius Paullus: Polyb. 18.35.4-5

(Büttner-Wobst) ... κύριος γενόμενος τῆς Μακεδόνων βασιλείας, ἐν ᾗ τῆς ἄλλης χωρὶς κατασκευῆς καὶ χορηγίας ἐν αὐτοῖς εὐρέθη τοῖς θησαυροῖς ἀργυρίου καὶ χρυσοῦ πλείω τῶν ἑξακισχιλίων ταλάντων, οὐχ οἷον ἐπεθύμησε τούτων τινός, ἀλλ' οὐδ' αὐτόπτης ἡβουλήθη γενέσθαι... καίτοι κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον βίον οὐ περιττεύων τῇ χορηγίᾳ, τὸ δ' ἐναντίον ἐλ- λείπων μᾶλλον.

The value of the treasure taken from Macedonia varies from author to author (120 million sesterces Liv. 45.40.1, 210 million sesterces Vel. Pat. 1.9.6, 300 million sesterces Plin. NH 33.56, 5022 talents (in silver) Plut. Aem. Paul. 32-33, 6000 talents Diodorus 31.8.11), but the sum was immense enough to relieve Italy of paying tributum (Cic. de Off. 2.76, Plut. Aem. Paul. 38.1, Plin. NH 33.56)

18) The wealth of Carthage was legendary, eg. Polyb. 18.35.9 (Büttner-Wobst)

... κύριος γενόμενος (i.e. Publius Scipio) τῆς Καρχηδόνας, ἥτις ἔδοκει πολυχρημονεστάτη τῶν κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην εἶναι πόλεων...

The sacking continued even in the first century B.C. with Sulla's ransacking of Olympia, Delphi, Epidaurus, and Athens.

19) One of the most astounding hoards was that taken at Tolosa

in Gaul by Servilius Caepio in 106 B.C. See Strabo 4.1.13 (Jones)

...ὁ Ποσειδωνίου λόγος· τὰ μὲν γὰρ εὑρεθέντα ἐν τῇ Τολώσση  
χρήματα μυρίων που καὶ πεντακκισχιλίων ταλάντων γενέσθαι φησί,  
τὰ μὲν ἐν σηκοῖς ἀποκείμενα, τὰ δ' ἐν λίμναις ἱεραῖς, οὐδεμίαν  
κατασκευὴν ἔχοντα, ἀλλ' ἄργον χρυσίον καὶ ἄργυρον·... ἡ γὰρ  
πολύχρυσος οὔσα καὶ δεισιδαϊμόνων καὶ οὐ πολυτελῶν τοῖς βίοις  
πολλαχοῦ τῆς Κελτικῆς ἔσχε θησαυρούς·

Spain was particularly rich in gold and silver from the Roman point of view, and had the potential for more intensive exploitation: in 200 B.C. L. Cornelius Lentulus brought back 43 000 lb of silver, and only six years later the elder Cato was still able to produce 25 000 lb (Healy, J.F. 1978. p. 56).

20) Epigraphic evidence from places like Delos and Naxos does not provide a solution to the problem. The further a town's distance from Rome, the less likely were the citizens of that foreign town to distinguish wealthy freedmen and Italians from free-born Romans (D'Arms, J.H. 1981. p. 30); see also Hatzfeld, J. (1919).

21) D'Arms, J.H. op. cit.: 34-35. cf. the Lucilian fragment to which he refers from the "itinerarium Lucilii" (123-124 Marx):

inde Dic[i]architum populos Delumque minorem

ad portam mille a porta est. exinde Salernum.

and the comments of the source: Paulus ex Festo p. 122M "Minorem Delum Puteolos esse dixerunt, quod Delos aliquando maximum emporium fuerit totius orbis terrarum; cui successit postea Puteolanum, quod municipium Graecum antea Dikiarchia vocitatum

est." (in Marx Vol. 2 pp. 58-59).

22) 545 discovered by 1980, to be exact, mainly from the western Mediterranean (Hopkins, K. 1980. JRS 70: 105)

23) Cicero praises his brother for not looting Asia during his proconsulship,

praeclarum est enim summo cum imperio fuisse in Asia biennium sic ut nullum te signum, nulla pictura, nullum vas, nulla vestis, nullum mancipium, nulla forma cuiusquam, nulla condicio pecuniae, quibus rebus abundat ista provincia, ab summa integritate continentiaque deduxerit.

(1 Shackleton Bailey, vlg. ad O. F. 1.1.8)

If senators were prevented from owning land in the provinces until the reign of Augustus, then it is the more understandable that they brought luxurious goods back to Rome. Cf. Rawson, E. (1976) p. 91, "...they must have sold what they could not carry to Rome". The restrictions were probably undermined by new senators with provincial backgrounds.

24) Aside from the purple and spice trade, to which some scholarly effort has been devoted, eg. Miller, J. I. (1969), and Reinhold, M. (1970).

25) Garnsey, P. and Saller, R. (1987) p. 93, "Their transportation was in effect subsidised by the state; they were a "freeloading" secondary cargo riding on the back of bulk goods carried, typically, under government contract". This idea makes a

lot of sense. Since later on the grain shipment operated between Alexandria and Puteoli, and since Alexandria served as a major emporium for redistribution of imports from the Red Sea, "...transport of grain must have provided yet more opportunities for the carriage of small but valuable consignments of eastern luxuries to Italy and thence to the West, and the revenues from tolls probably increased" (Greene, K. 1986. p. 29).

26) Eg. Polyb. 31.25.4 (Büttner-Wobst), οἱ μὲν γὰρ εἰς ἑρωμένους τῶν νέων, οἱ δ' εἰς ἑταίρας ἐξεκέχυντο, πολλοὶ δ' εἰς ἀκροάματα καὶ πότους καὶ τὴν ἐν τούτοις πολυτέλειαν, ταχέως ἡρπακότες ἐν τῷ Περσικῷ πολέμῳ τὴν τῶν Ἑλλήνων εἰς τοῦτο τὸ μέρος εὐχέρεيان. (5) καὶ τηλικαύτη τις ἐνεπεπτώκει περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα τῶν ἔργων ἀκρασία τοῖς νέοις ὥστε πολλοὺς μὲν ἐρώμενον ἡγορακέναι ταλάντου, πολλοὺς δὲ ταρίχου Ποντικῷ κεράμιον τριακοσίων δραχμῶν.

27) Observe a passage in Livy (25.40.1) that illustrates this:

...Marcellus captis Syracusis, cum cetera in Sicilia tanta fide atque integritate composuisset ut non modo suam gloriam sed etiam maiestatem populi Romani augeret, ornamenta urbis, signa tabulasque quibus abundabant Syracusae, Romam devexit, hostium quidem illa spolia et parta belli iure; ceterum inde primum initium mirandi Graecarum artium opera licentiaeque hinc sacra profanaque omnia volgo spoliandi factum est...

28) For a full discussion of this social phenomenon see Corbett, P. (1986).

29) Griffin, J. (1976) JRS 66: 90; cf. "libidinosae ac delicatae

iuventutis" Cic. ad Atticum 1.19.8; "hi pueri tam lepidi ac delicati non solum amare et amari neque saltare et cantare sed etiam sicas vibrare et spargere venena didicerunt" Cic. in Catilinam 2.23.

30) See Griffin art.cit., and his Latin Poets and Roman Life Duckworth: London (1985), esp. pp. 7-24.

31) Fragments pose problems of interpretation. Do the following examples designate objects and habits current in Rome at the time of composition?:

"<venibam> quom de opsonio, stilo me pupugit in manum"

Cn. Naevius Glaucoma (Ribbeck 1890, p. 17)

"pol haut parasitorum aliorum <hic> similest..."

Naevius Guminasticus fr.8 (idem. p. 18)

"supparus" Naevius Nautae, Festus p. 310M

"supparus...vestimen[tum lineum] - - puni[ceum vestimentum ita vo]cat nevi de [bello Puni]co" (idem. p. 19)

"...sanderacino ore" Naevius Inc. Fab. fr.17 (idem. p. 32):

for this red colouring agent cf. Plin. NH 34.18.55-56, 35.6.22, and Forbes, R.J. (1955) Vol.3 pp. 206-207, 213-214. Was this sulphide of arsenic being imported from Asia by Naevius' day (from the famous mine τὸ Σανδαράκούργιον, Strab. 12.3.40) or was some more easily obtainable equivalent being used?



"...tum ex aure eius stalagmium

domi habeo" Caecilius Statius (c. 219 B.C.-168 B.C.),  
Karine fr.2 (idem. p. 62)

"carbasina molochina ampelina" Caecilius Pausimachus fr.3  
(idem. p. 67)

etc.

32) Cf.

triduum unum est haud intermissum hic esse et bibi,  
scorta duci, pergraecari, fidicinas, tibicinas  
ducere.

Most. 959-61

stat fullo, phrygio, aurufex, lanarius;  
caupones patagiarii, indusiarii,  
flammarii, violarii, carinarii;  
aut manulearii, aut murobatharii etc... Aulularia 508 ff.

33) Cf. the unnecessary detail of a passage like Livy 39.6.7-8:

luxuriae enim peregrinae origo ab exercitu Asiatico invecta in  
urbem est. ii primum lectos aeratos, vestem stragulam pretiosam,  
plagulas et alia textilia, et quae tum magnificae supellectilis  
habebantur, monopodia et abacos Romam advexerunt. (8) tunc  
psaltriae sambucistriaeque et convivalia alia ludorum  
oblectamenta addita epulis; epulae quoque ipsae et cura et sumptu  
maiore apparari coeptae.

A passage like Diodorus Siculus 37.3.3 (Dindorf), though similar

in substance, lacks the same register because the vocabulary does not have the exoticism it has in the Latin. Note how Diodorus is forced to compensate by qualifying many of his nouns with compound adjectives to get an analogous effect:

διὸ καὶ δείπνων πολυδαπάνων παραθέσεις ἐπετόλασαν καὶ  
μύρων θαυμαζομένων εὐωδία καὶ στρωμνῆς ἀνθινῆς καὶ μεγαλο-  
πλουτου παρασκευαὶ τρικλίνων καὶ ἐλέφαντος καὶ ἀργύρου  
καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν πολυτελεστάτων ὑλῶν περιττᾶς  
δεδημιουργημένων κατασκευαί.

34) Cf. A. Gellius 2.24.1 (Marshall): "parsimonia apud veteres Romanos et victus atque cenarum tenuitas non domestica solum observatione ac disciplina, sed publica quoque animadversione legumque complurium sanctionibus custodita est."

On the subject generally see Baltrusch, E. (1989) pp. 40-131.

35) Livy 34.1-8 is the fullest treatment. As far as he was concerned, it was a significant point in Rome's social history.

36) See examples collected by Culham, P. (1982) Latomus 42: 786

37) Livy hints at this interpretation through the mouth of Valerius: "cur sit autem lata, ipsum indicabit tempus. Hannibal in Italia erat, victor ad Cannas; iam Tarentum, iam Arpos, iam Capuam habebat; ad urbem Romam admoturus exercitum videbatur; defecerant socii; ...non pecuniam in aerario habebamus...aurum et argentum omne ab senatoribus eius rei initio orto in publicum

conferebamus; viduae et pupilli pecunias suas in aerarium deferebant..." (34.6.10-14 Weissenborn-Müller).

38) Art. cit. p. 787

39) Art. cit. p. 792; that the material prosperity of one's womenfolk in some way reflected on a man may be illustrated from the fact that Scipio gave the finery he had inherited from Aemilia to his own mother Papiria to maintain a state suitable to her rank (Polyb. 31.26.3-4). Cf. also Th. Veblen op. cit. p. 83, "...decency still requires the wife to consume some goods conspicuously for the reputability of the household and its head."

40) Art. cit. pp. 792-93

41) The behaviour of the women seems to me to conform in a general way with the practice of occentatio, which involved chanting by a crowd, usually at the door of some individual, with the intention of bringing infamy upon the individual vocally. Originally, and occasionally even in the historical period, occentatio also entailed setting the individual's door alight (Lintott, A.W. 1968. pp. 8-9)

42) Livy 34.8.2, Val. Max. 9.1.3

43) See Carson, A. (1988) pp. 10-11

44) Cp. Horace's advice to the elegist Valgius Rufus at Od. 2.9. The sentence "tu semper urges flebilibus modis / Mysten ademptum" (ll. 9-10) betrays impatience with Valgius' sentimentality.

45) Cytheris, the freedwoman of Volumnius and mistress of Antony and Gallus, is probably the kind of woman upon whom a Cynthia and a Nemesis are based.

46) See Axelson, B. (1945) p. 108 and Tränkle, H. (1960) pp. 122-123. On prices cf. "Ameana puella defututa / tota milia me decem poposcit..." Cat. 41.1-2, but then this is hardly a love poem.

## CHAPTER II: PROPERTIUS

A-t-elle besoin d'illusion? non; pour être adorable il lui suffit d'être elle-même. Vous lui reprochez de se mettre mal; je le crois bien: toute parure lui nuit; tout ce qui la cache la dépare. C'est dans l'abandon du négligé qu'elle est vraiment ravissante. Grâce aux chaleurs accablantes que nous éprouvons, un déshabillé de simple toile me laisse voir sa taille ronde et souple. Une seule mousseline couvre sa gorge; et mes regards furtifs, mais pénétrants, en ont déjà saisi les formes enchanteresses.

Choderlos de Laclos, Les Liaisons Dangereuses, Lettre 6.

Biographically-based criticism of Latin Love Elegy has finally, one hopes, been laid to rest. Propertius constructs a series of rhetorical vignettes (one could almost say "windows") that give the reader access to a fictionalised love-affair. Artistic unity is attained through the recurrence of two principal characters (the poet and his mistress Cynthia), and the poet's own view of his standing with his mistress. The elegies can thus be conceived of as artistic responses to changes in the temperament of the fictionalised mistress. In essence, then, the poems depict the psychology of the erotic state..

This makes Elegy sound very abstract, but, as J. Griffin has reminded us in two important works (1976 and 1985), the building blocks of Augustan poetry remain rooted in the social and economic realities of the time, no matter how abstract the final product. Hence it will come as no surprise to find the

encroachment of luxuria in Propertius' elegies, and, given the nature of the erotic ideal described in my previous chapter, it will be expected that Propertius try to prevent its invasion of his literary love-affair.

In this chapter I shall analyse each of Propertius' books in turn to identify the ways in which he treats the theme of luxury.

### Book I

At a first reading, the attitude towards luxury in women's clothing and cosmetics in 1.2 is negative. Propertius protests that such deception is unnecessary because his mistress is startlingly attractive in herself (in propriis membra nitere bonis, 1.2.6) and, if anything, it actually detracts from her natural beauty (naturaegue decus, 1.2.5). Propertius goes to some lengths to emphasise the foreign origin of this adornment: Coa veste, <sup>1</sup>Orontea...<sup>2</sup>murra (note the long penultimate Greek "e" which contributes to the foreign and exotic resonance), <sup>3</sup>peregrinis...muneribus (1.2.2,3,4). The intrusion of mercantile words like vendere and mercato (1.2.4,5) undermines the impression of sophistication by drawing attention to the sordid means by which luxuries are obtained. The implication is that the filth and "cheapness" of the articles may be transferred to the female possessor.

The poem is a rhetorical development of the theme "nature vs art", hence the clearly discernible oppositions which are set up,

often within the same line, eg.

<u>naturaegue decus</u>	---	<u>mercato...cultu</u> <sup>4</sup>
<u>tuae...figurae</u>	---	<u>ulla...medicina</u>
<u>nudus Amor</u>	---	<u>artificem</u> (1.2.5,7,8)

For rhetorical illustration of this theme, the speaker turns first to the natural world, with emphasis on its unparalleled attractions: humus formosa, colores (line 9), formosius (line 11), litora...picta<sup>5</sup> (line 13), dulcius...canunt (line 14), and particularly on the spontaneity of that beauty, summittat (line 9), sponte sua melius (line 10), surgat, indocilis, nativis...lapillis, nulla...arte (lines 11-14).<sup>6</sup> He then passes on to mythical exempla which are treated paradoxically in an uningenuous manner.<sup>7</sup> A catalogue of homely or Roman love affairs might have seemed more consistent with his stance. However, considering the poverty of the Roman mythological tradition with regard to erotic incidents, it is quite understandable for Propertius to use Greek exempla,<sup>8</sup> bearing in mind that the heroines of old did not require, much less possess, additional "toilette", hence the designation in 1.4.7 formosi temporis aetas. The elegy began by moralistically condemning luxurious cosmetics but eventually turns to flatter Cynthia by praising her beauty. Propertius emphasises that fidelity in a woman creates true sophistication (line 26), not her utilising of luxurious cosmetics:

uni si qua placet, culta puella sat est.

Hence, at the very start of the book, Propertius gives the impression that he is not seduced by external ornament on a woman's person. The artifices employed by the luxurious are superficial, an insult to the devout suitor. Women should be as "unspoiled" as nature, both physically and, by implication, morally. The true lover (i.e. Propertius) desires the essence of his beloved, not a facade that conceals or mars that essence.

In 1.4, which is addressed to Bassus, the picture of ideal feminine beauty presented to the reader is more or less consistent with that of 1.2. This is all the more interesting because in this poem Propertius is speaking to a man and not Cynthia, and so one might expect him to speak more candidly on the topic. Either Propertius really does subscribe to the female aesthetic he propounded in 1.2, or his description of Cynthia's natural beauty in 1.4 is an instance of self-righteous one-upmanship, or he intends his statements to go on record for Cynthia herself to hear. There is an implication that Bassus is attempting to separate the lovers (1.4.1-2), and in 1.4.17-22 we read that Cynthia will hear the entire story.

When presented by Tullus with an invitation to see the East (1.6), Propertius declines "...Asiae veteres cernere divitias" (1.6.14). The attractions of the East are both cultural and material. Doctas...Athenas (1.6.13) betrays an intellectual interest, and the expression veteres...divitias alludes to the fabled wealth of the cities of Asia Minor. The poet's reasons for declining the invitation are not moralistic but elegiac. It will upset Cynthia if he goes (lines 16 ff.). The closing lines of the



poem provide a Roman literary conception of the ease and wealth that Tullus can expect to enjoy in the East:

at tu seu mollis qua tendit Ionia, seu qua  
Lydia Pactoli tingit arata liquor;  
seu pedibus terras seu pontum carpere remis  
ibis, et accepti pars eris imperii:  
tum tibi si qua mei veniet non immemmor hora,  
vivere me duro sidere certus eris. (1.6.31-36)

Mollis (line 31) can have an effeminate or decadent resonance, but the delicacy and abstraction of the allusions serve to expel sordid associations. This would seem to be deliberate, since in 1.14, also addressed to Tullus, the list of eastern delights is more direct and material, especially in lines 19-22. The stance of Propertius towards luxury in 1.6 suits the rhetorical requirements of the occasion: Propertius contrives to depict Tullus' destination as offering exotic comforts in return for patriotic duty, while the poet's own circumstances are unenviable, vivere me duro sidere (line 36). Thus the reader is presented with an unusual situation where the campaigner/traveller's life of negotium brings comfort and leisure, while the stay-at-home suffers hardship instead of otium.

In 1.9 Propertius develops the idea he articulated in 1.8B, where his poetical gifts found greater acceptance than material ones. Empta (1.9.4) suggests that Ponticus' girl is a slave or that she

has been seduced with the aid of luxurious goods, but we know from 1.7 that Ponticus is a poet (lines 1-4), and if Propertius was successful in 1.8B with his poetry then why is not Ponticus with his? The answer is to be found in the genre Ponticus specialises in - epic - which is inappropriate for wooing loved ones or assuaging erotic suffering (1.9.9-12). Money and poetry are not enough. Only Propertius' type of poetry achieves the result depicted in 1.8B, as well as a medicinal quality which can be employed to solace other unhappy lovers and provide advice for reconciliation (1.10.15-30; cf. 1.1.31-32, 35-38).

When the elegiac lover is separated from his loved one in any way (eg. 2.19) he is afflicted with suspicion and insecurity. When Cynthia goes to Baiae (1.11), the town's reputation for wealthy and decadent living poses a special threat.<sup>10</sup> Initially, Propertius does not spell out that threat in detail, but makes insinuations as to the town's depravity: molliter (1.11.14), "sed quod in hac omnis parte timetur amor" (1.11.18), where Baiae is singled out (sed...in hac...parte) as being a place which inspires fear even for lovers whose women are virtuous. In the closing lines, Propertius' dread gets the better of him and elicits a more direct comment on the nature of that resort, corruptas...Baiae (line 27), followed by a curse, "a pereant Baiae, crimen amoris, aquae!" (line 30). The last line demonstrates that Propertius' objection to Baiae does not necessarily lie in the luxurious activities associated with it per se but rather in the threat it poses to his personal sexual relationship. This transpires despite his reference to chastity and reputation, fama (line 17), castis...puellis (line 29). The

word fama and the use of the plural in line 29 imply concern for morals universally. However, this pose is undermined by the morbidly hysterical statements made in lines 21-26:<sup>11</sup>

an mihi nunc maior carae custodia matris?  
aut sine te vitae cura sit ulla meae?  
tu mihi sola domus, tu, Cynthia, sola parentes,  
omnia tu nostrae tempora laetitiae.  
seu tristis veniam seu contra laetus amicis,  
quicquid ero, dicam 'Cynthia causa fuit.'

The selfish intentions of the curse in line 30 are poorly concealed.

The geographical setting in which we discover Tullus in 1.14 is different from that visualised for him in 1.6, but his material circumstances have not changed overmuch: idle comfort and a languid river feature in 1.6.31-32 and in the opening lines of 1.14. Tullus reclines by the Tiber in a manner that bespeaks otium and luxury:

Tu licet abiectus Tiberina molliter unda  
Lesbia Mentoreo vina bibas opere. (1.14.1-2)

Lesbian wine would be expensive and of superior quality,<sup>12</sup> while the works of the fourth century B.C. silversmith Mentor would be rare and valuable.<sup>13</sup> In Juvenal, this master's work is a sine qua non for the tables of the rich in a bygone era,

rarae sine Mentore mensae (8.104). Tullus' display of wealth is ostentatious enough for Propertius to state "nescit Amor magnis cedere divitiis" (1.14.8). As a statement of fact this is clearly false. Although the phrase could be understood to refer solely to Propertius' predicament, its sententious tone strives for a more general application. Once again, wealth and luxury are not refused for their own properties but only in so far as they affect or compare with the elegiac lover's relationship with his mistress.

In communicating his preference for the relationship over other more worldly means of achieving happiness and contentment, Propertius employs a metaphorical description of his own non-material "wealth" (1.14.9-12):

nam sive optatam mecum trahit illa quietem,  
seu facili totum ducit amore diem,  
tum mihi Pactoli veniunt sub tecta liquores,  
et legitur Rubris gemma sub aequoribus.

In doing so, he refers to a river that he mentioned in 1.6 as something accessible to Tullus alone: the Pactolus.<sup>14</sup> This device renders the address to Tullus more convincing rhetorically, in that Propertius adjusts his language to acknowledge what the reader, moving sequentially through the elegies, will expect as appropriate for Tullus. Why does Propertius employ these particular metaphors to communicate the value of his love? Does he see them as illustrating the parity in wealth and luxury he enjoys at an elevated erotic level, or does he use them simply

because they are the only comparisons Tullus will appreciate and understand? It is surely ironic that Propertius has achieved at Rome what Tullus has to travel far afield for in 1.6.

The objects Tullus possesses are not presented here as being undesirable in themselves, but since they are incompatible with a successful love affair Propertius is compelled to ignore them:

nam quis divitiis adverso gaudet Amore?

nulla mihi tristi praemia sint Venere! (1.14.15-16)

and note the force of dum in:

quae mihi dum placata aderit, non ulla verebor

regna vel Alcinoi munera despiciere. (1.14.23-24)

The conceit is developed with examples of expensive articles, Arabium...limen, ostrino...toro, variis serica textilibus (lines 19, 20, 22), which are of no use to the unsuccessful lover. The poet's conception of the applicability of luxury is limited to the erotic: beds, bedclothes or chamber hangings, and the thresholds to doors (as a means of access to the loved one). However appropriate all this advice is to Tullus, there is no indication of a current erotic dissatisfaction on his part, and so one suspects that much of the rhetorical development of the theme "love vs riches" is for Propertius' own peace of mind: Alcinoi munera (line 24) may just be a way of saying "fabulous wealth", but an undefined, half-sensed fear of gifts to Cynthia

from a wealthy suitor may also lurk beneath the phrase. If so, it would give the end of the poem an unexpected twist.

Propertius' attitude towards wealth and luxury is mildly negative in tone in Book I, but he does not exploit accessible themes on the danger or debilitating effects of their influence. In 1.14 he could have expanded on the negative aspects of seeking contentment through wealth, rather than simply concentrating on the positive value (surely dubious) of a life of love. Elegy 17 offers an opportunity for a rhetorical excursus on avaritia as a motive for the invention of ships and sea-faring, but Propertius avoids the topic entirely. The non-Romanness of much of the luxury does not seem to concern him either. In 1.2 he is occupied with nature vs. art, not Roman wholesomeness vs. Greek cosmetic superfluity (granted, cosmetics were Greek, but their origin is not stressed as much as it could have been). If luxury is condemned, its opposite, frugality, is never extolled proportionately. As with many other aspects of the elegiac lover's behaviour, this attitude to luxury stems from a selfish morality which is oriented entirely towards the relationship between himself and his loved one. Anything that acts against this relationship or consumes time which could be spent on it is found unacceptable.

## Book II

The sensuality of Coa vestis in 1.2.2 was implicit but suppressed by the strictures imposed by the poet's immediate rhetorical goal: to convince his beloved that she had no need of luxurious clothing to adorn her person. In 2.1.5-8, a passage that seems to allude deliberately to 1.2, and in 2.3.15, the attractiveness of the garment is explicit since these two elegies do not have the same rhetorical aims as 1.2:

sive illam Cois fulgentem incedere †cogis†,  
hac totum e Coa veste volumen erit;  
seu vidi ad frontem sparsos errare capillos,  
gaudet laudatis ire superba comis.

(2.1.5-8)

nec si qua Arabio lucet bombyce puella

(2.3.15)

The exotic origin of the clothing is not an issue of any moral significance, because here the material poses no threat. Even if Lachmann's "coccis" is read for "cogis" in 2.1.5,<sup>17</sup> despite the transposition with lines 7-8 that it requires,<sup>18</sup> the foreign provenance of the fabric is not necessarily emphasised by the adjective of colour. It is clear from the context that the vestis serves merely as a medium through which Cynthia's beauty can be appreciated.<sup>19</sup> An equal indifference to the provenance of the material is apparent in 2.3.15, Arabio...bombyce. The fact that Arabian silk is not attested from any other textual source

suggests that the precise provenance communicated by the adjective is unimportant, simply exotically ornamental.<sup>20</sup> Here the object is to eulogise Cynthia. The colourful exotic names enhance, rather than detract from, that object.

Elegy 2.16 provides a key text for anyone who intends to explore Propertius' attitude to exotic luxury and the role it plays in his elegiac framework.

A nameless praetor,<sup>21</sup> recently returned from service in Illyricum, introduces a threat (maxima cura 2.16.2) because of the gifts he is able to bestow upon Cynthia from his loot (maxima praeda 2.16.2).<sup>22</sup> The precise contents of this booty are never enumerated; rather Illyricum serves as a signifier for all exotic materials acquired through negotium overseas, and introduces the theme of mercantile wealth as a threat to the poet's relationship with his mistress. This becomes apparent from the geographical indicators that follow: saxo...Cerauno (2.16.3), alias...Illyrias (10), in Oceanum...gemmas (17), ex ipsa...dona Tyro (18). The latter two references are applied to the poet himself; they are the places to which Cynthia demands he travel in order to acquire gifts for her. Typical of the hyperbole employed by Propertius when he reduces an undesirable activity to an adynaton through exaggeration, the poet's labours will have to outdo the accomplishments of the praetor. Oceanum<sup>23</sup> (2.16.17), whether the Atlantic or Indian Ocean, can be glossed as "the end of the earth", and the intensive pronominal adjective ipsa in ex ipsa...Tyro (2.16.18) also emphasises the distance of that city from Rome. Apart from the poet's love of otium and his



negation of the activities usually expected of Roman men, there must also exist an aversion to the separation from his mistress necessitated by such trips, remembering that even separations of a few days, whatever their cause, are painful in the extreme (eg. 2.16.23, 2.17.3-4, 2.19.1-2, 27-28, 2.24B.19-20, 2.33A.1-2).

It is perhaps significant that at an early stage in the poem Cynthia is presented as having an appetite for things the poet himself is unable to offer:

Cynthia non sequitur fascis nec curat honores,  
semper amatorum ponderat una sinus. (2.16.11-12)

Despite this, the poet seeks to exclude (wishfully of course) his own mistress from the ensuing tirade against wealth, and, as in other poems, give his discourse the appearance of general applicability, though this attempt is virtually destroyed by lines 17-18. Propertius asks a question which is so phrased as to define the awful essence of sexual relationships, the bare reality without the frills of human deceptions and niceties:

ergo muneribus quivis mercatur amorem? (2.16.15)

The anonymity of quivis challenges the entire fabric of the elegiac construct. Physical features, character, and accomplishments (especially poetry) have no role in this conception of human relationships. It is simply an exchange of wealth for love (note the juxtaposition of mercatur and amorem

2.16.15). Propertius' attitude to merx is unambiguously expressed by the adjective that accompanies it in the following line:

Iuppiter, indigna merce puella perit. (2.16.16)

Propertius offers no real answer or practical solution to the horrific revelation of love for money. Instead, he exercises his imagination upon a hypothetical, and impossible, return of the rustic life and the quasi-pastoral erotic ideal that inevitably accompanies it:

atque utinam Romae nemo esset dives, et ipse  
straminea posset dux habitare casa!  
numquam venales essent ad munus amicae,  
atque una fieret cana puella domo. (2.16.19-22)

In an Augustan context, casae, by this time, were quaint antiquarian anomalies, studiously restored from time to time,<sup>24</sup> fake relics (probably) from Rome's past. Unlike in Tibullus, the pastoral setting is not developed into a convincing option, but, as rendered by Propertius, sounds rather ridiculous and half-hearted: straw huts and growing old together hardly constitute a serious exploration of an alternative life-style. The attempt to make it a wish of universal application does not ring true either. Again, the logic of the apodosis, beginning line 21 (numquam venales essent...), or if it is a continuation of a wish, the consequence or attendant circumstance of such a situation, implied by atque in line 22, is difficult to follow upon closer analysis. Here the cause of the vice is perceived

simplistically as external to the sufferer; in other words it is not avaritia that is confronted, but rather the target at which such an impulse aims, the merx, which is spirited away in this hypothetical setting.

Naturally, the blame for much of this confusion can be attributed to Propertius' somewhat contradictory representation of Cynthia's motives and impulses. Throughout Propertius' elegies, one is struck by an ongoing tension between Cynthia as a construct of the poet's often partisan imagination, and Cynthia as a person outside this immediate construct, whose actions must frequently be assimilated into it and somehow explained in terms of it. The poet's, and consequently the reader's, perception of Cynthia's motives and appetites is often vicarious, at best vague. On a number of occasions this phenomenon can be explained by the poet's unwillingness to surrender to what is obviously unpleasant reality. In another poem (2.24A), Propertius is perfectly frank concerning Cynthia's avidity for exotic goods and trinkets: peacock fans (2.24A.11), intimating vanity in Cynthia herself, crystal balls (12),<sup>25</sup> suggesting emotional coldness, ivory knucklebones (13), suggesting she is trivial and unpredictable, and vilia dona (not "cheap" as Butler and Barber p. 231 rightly point out, but perhaps "worthless", cf. 2.16.16 indigna merce) from the Via Sacra (14). This street was renowned for the sale of items of this sort.<sup>26</sup> All these are dispendia (2.24A.15) - financial expenses and a waste of time. Propertius objects to all this, iratum...me (2.24A.13), but the reader receives the impression that he fulfils her wishes just the same.

In 2.16, as it transpires, the poet is dilatory in isolating the vice to which he is objecting: the vitiis...tuis of 2.16.32 are ambiguous. Exotic items recur in 2.16.43-45 in explicit association with Cynthia (tibi 43):

sed quascumque tibi vestis, quoscumque smaragdos,  
quosve dedit flavo lumine chrysolithos,  
haec videam rapidas in vanum ferre procellas.

By now the Illyrian connection has been forgotten, indeed has become irrelevant. The materials are formulaic: fine cloth and precious stones. The non-Latin nature of the vocabulary is sufficient to communicate the impression of exotic provenance; smaragdos (2.16.43), chrysolithos (2.16.44). Later the vestis too<sup>27</sup> is allocated a foreign adjective, Sidonia vestis (2.16.55). However, at this point, the poet does not continue to elaborate on the corrupting influence of exotic luxury. There is a shift towards the condemnation of pe<sup>r</sup>iurium in an erotic context (periuros...amantis 47, periuras...puellas 53), with an indirect invocation of Jupiter as the protector of oaths. Why should this become the focus? It is not easy to explain, but presumably the poet is referring to his unarticulated fear lest Cynthia engage in infidelity as a direct result of being seduced by luxurious offerings. Propertius' generalised utterances (47-54), especially amantis (47), puellas (53), are finally given a more personal note with tibi of line 55. Quare (55) provides the link between what has gone before and Cynthia's behaviour, actual or foreseen. An examination of the sequence, however, reveals an interesting

device:

47-54 breaking of oaths results in punishment

55-56 don't value exotic gifts, Cynthia, or eventually  
you will be punished.

The actual periurium on Cynthia's part is left unexpressed, but is surely to be understood. Exotic gifts become synonymous with infidelity at the end of the poem. Once again, it is not foreign luxury which Propertius objects to, but the fact that there is another suitor who is able to offer them to his loved one, creating the possibility that Cynthia will be attracted to that other person.  
28

Although it does not deal with exotic luxury, 2.33B serves as a useful comparison with 2.16 in that it betrays Propertius' lack of interest in issues which have the potential to be treated from a conservative moral standpoint, as I showed in Chapter I. The poet complains that Cynthia spends her nights drinking and dabbling in the sort of games that attend on this pastime. The poet is confronted with an excellent opportunity to discourse upon the debilitating effects of prolonged drinking parties, and especially the objectionable topic of female alcoholism.  
29  
Initially he appears to approach the subject in this very manner. The exclamatory wish,

a pereat, quicumque meracas repperit uvas

corrumpitque bonas nectare primus aquas! (2.33B.27-28)

is the sort of statement the reader would expect to introduce a moral excursus on such a topic (one should recall the comparable wish in 2.16.19-20). There follow a number of mythological exempla on the disastrous results of alcohol: Icarus 2.33B.29-30, Eurytion 31, Polyphemus 32 (compare Eriphyla 2.16.29, Creusa 2.16.30). Subsequent to this, a list of readily recognised effects of heavy drinking:

vino forma perit, vino corrumpitur aetas

vino saepe suum nescit amica virum (2.33B.33-34)

The first two might act as deterrents as far as Cynthia is concerned, but the third, and in fact the one given the most emphasis here, is almost certain to elicit little response from the lady. Line 34 has already undermined any attempt by Propertius to play the generalising moralist, since his own private desires have been permitted to encroach. The death-knell for this position comes in the lines immediately following. The generalisation of line 33, on the poet's own admission, simply does not apply in Cynthia's case:

me miserum, ut multo nihil est mutata Lyaeo!

iam bibe: formosa es: nil tibi vina nocent. (2.33B.35-36)

Propertius is not concerned with the effects of wine on women generally, and if there are no obvious external influences on Cynthia's person, he is content to drop the issue. One suspects that infidelity (hinted at in 2.33B.34) is all that really concerns him anyway, just as in 2.16. At this point, Propertius

draws upon an ironically cynical tradition in erotic poetry, where a lover wants his victim drunk so that he can take advantage of him or her (2.33B.41-44).<sup>30</sup> If this is the case, Cynthia can drink as much as she likes (39-40), even if she does it in a particularly indulgent and luxurious manner: largius effuso...Falerno (39), aurato mollius in calice (40). Naturally the perils of a drunk and wanton woman, alluded to at 2.33B.34, are studiously ignored in lines 41-44, but are humorously present for the reader.

Elegy 2.18C picks up and develops in greater detail a topic touched upon in 1.2.1,

quid iuvat ornato procedere, vita, capillo

As in that elegy, Propertius argues that the issue hangs between natural and cosmetic beauty,

ut natura dedit, sic omnis recta figura est. (2.18C.25)<sup>31</sup>

Differently from 1.2 however, the poet introduces the opposition Roman vs foreign, as if Roman and natural unadulterated beauty are one in Cynthia's case:

turpis Romano Belgicus ore color (2.18C.26)

The dyeing of hair provides a common theme for authors in a variety of genres, as does the use of wigs. Tibullus touches upon

it (1.8.41-46), Ovid devotes virtually an entire elegy to the subject, highly comical in tone (Am. 1.14), and it comes up in his Ars Amatoria (3.163-165). Naturally, Martial does not omit it either (eg. 8.33.20).<sup>32</sup> Generally, when the topic arises, it is treated as a futile and ridiculous practice.<sup>33</sup> Propertius, however, seems to regard it as some sort of physical deception:

illi sub terris fiant mala multa puellae,  
quae mentita suas vertit inepta comas! (2.18C.27-28)

The verb mentiri insinuates a potential for deception in other more crucial areas, and the punishment, though comically exaggerated (28), is reminiscent of that associated with more serious periurium in 2.16.47-56 and 2.17.1-10.

As in 1.2, the objection to cosmetics peters out with the same conclusion, reflecting the self-interest of the poet. In 1.2.26 Propertius had stated

uni si qua placet, culta puella sat est

which really weakens his argument against cosmetics and luxury on the basis of the superiority of natural beauty. So here, the argument against non-Roman colouring ends up with

mi formosa sat es, si modo saepe venis. (2.18C.30)

Cynthia's flirtation with other men would appear to be the real issue (ludis 24, cf. 35-36). The dyeing of hair is merely a



pretext for entering the discourse in the first place.

So much for occasions where Propertius seems to deprecate exotic luxury. However, there are also instances where we come across positive attitudes towards non-Roman materials and behaviour. We can dispense briefly with 2.30B.13-15:

Ista senes licet accusent convivia duri:

nos modo propositum, vita, teramus iter.

illorum antiquis onerantur legibus aures.

Whether this contains a direct reference to Augustus' moral legislation (cf. Suet. Aug. 89, Livy Per. 59), or is a statement typical of a lover who rejects social authority in favour of commitment to a mistress (cf. the senes severiores of Cat. 5.2), is unclear and, of course, unimportant. Such statements fall into the category of utterance that distinguishes the erotic poet's way of life from more traditional and therefore acceptable modes. This may include the rejection of various mores maiorum, if such a rejection is expedient (as it is perceived to be here). The nature of the convivia is conveniently vague.

When exotic materials are employed for a purpose which transcends sordid merx, and, more especially, the purchase of sexual favours with luxurious treasures (cf. 2.16.15), they are viewed in a different light. An example of this attitude on the part of Propertius is given in 2.31, where the poet describes the new colonnades around the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine, dedicated

by Augustus in 28 B.C. The tone throughout this elegy is one of admiration;<sup>34</sup> in fact the poet seems to revel in the exotic nature of the materials used in the construction of the buildings and sculptures. Adjectives of provenance abound, as do others that signify vast expense and quality: aurea.../porticus (2.31.1-2), Poenis...columnis (3), marmoreus (6), Myronis/...signa (7-8), claro...marmore (9), Libyci...dentis (12<sup>+</sup> note how the ornate and rather "unnecessary" periphrasis emphasises the exotic, the adjective eburnum seems too bland), longa...veste (16<sup>+</sup> somewhat non-Roman and effeminate). However justified such expense and indulgence in luxurious material may be for the glorification of the new political order (a magno Caesare aperta fuit 2.31.2) and the god himself, one cannot help suspecting that Propertius identifies Apollo as his god, as representative of his art,<sup>35</sup> and that he therefore exults in Caesar's structure because it implies a full recognition of the bard's calling. The exotic materials are instruments of that glorification and recognition.

More complex in attitude is the group of elegies 2.22A, 2.23, and 2.25. It is, I think, significant that one of these elegies, and the relevant section of another, are addressed to males: "Demophoon" 2.22A, and tu quoque.../credula 2.25.21 f. Elegy 2.22A begins the sequence and is in many ways the most striking of the three. The opening line reads as if Propertius is deliberately attempting to contravene the "moral" framework of love elegy:

Scis here mi multas pariter placuisse puellas. (2.22A.1)

The scene shifts swiftly to the theatre (2.22A.4 ff.), an avowedly insalubrious place for the faithful lover,<sup>36</sup> and the reader remembers that, only a few poems back, the love-sick and depressed Propertius had found himself unable to attend such entertainments:

tot iam abiere dies, cum me nec cura theatri

nec tetigit Campi...

(2.16.33-34)

The allurements of the theatre, as described by Propertius, are unashamedly un-Roman and exotic: there is dancing on stage of a distinctly demoralising nature, molli...gestu (2.22A.5), and singing of a suspiciously uncontrolled and Eastern tenor, varios...modos (2.22A.6). There is a certain amount of material<sup>37</sup> in other writers on the moral reprehensibility of actresses. In the audience itself, we discover the poet attracted by the very features and cosmetic affectation he has been at pains to dissuade Cynthia from in other poems (eg. 1.2, 2.16, 2.18C): flimsy or revealing clothing non tecto pectore (2.22A.8), and hair ornamented in an exotic fashion vagi crines (9), Indica quos...gemma tenet (10). Similar admissions of delight in anti-elegiac attractions present themselves in 2.23: prostitutes who dress in an alluring manner, relecto...amictu (13), or sport un-Roman footwear, immundo...socco (15). The more foreign the women are, the better:

et quas Euphrates et quas mihi misit Orontes,

me iuerint.

(2.23.21-22)

Elegy 2.25 provides the comically bathetic denouement to the set. Here once again a variety of female types is postulated ranging from complexion, candore (2.25.41), fuscam (42), and racial type, Argiva (43), i.e. Greek, nostras (44), i.e. Roman, to social class (by means of dress code), plebeio <amictu> and sandycis amictu (45). However, Propertius warns that the result is unavoidably the same:

una sat est cuivis femina multa mala (2.25.48).

The elegiac construct has been rescued on purely practical grounds. It is simply the least of evils.

What motivates the poet's contradictory attitude towards the elegiac relationship and, subsequently, exotic items? For in this sequence Propertius comes closest to behaving like a normal Roman gentleman. There are a number of possibilities, and none need exclude the others. As mentioned before, the fact that the recipient in 2.22A is a man may have some significance, though one should not disallow the possibility that Cynthia is intended to hear the text somehow. To begin with, the statements made in this elegy could form a pleasing contrast to the "forever yours" of the poem immediately preceding it:

nos quocumque loco, nos omni tempore tecum  
sive aegra pariter sive valente sumus. (2.21.19-20)

After reading 2.22A, the reader is left wondering exactly quantum...Panthi...pagina finxit (2.21.1), and how much is

"true". Is this then simply a deliberate representation of hypocrisy, or comic irony, the inclusion of the reader in knowledge shared by Propertius and Demophoon, while Cynthia remains excluded from awareness? Then again, it is possible that the rhetorical exigencies of a male addressee demand or allow a different attitude to women, i.e. one more acceptable to male discourse and intelligible within it.<sup>39</sup> Or perhaps this sequence is merely symptomatic of a change in mood on Propertius' part: he expresses bravado and confidence, either false or genuine; or, if Cynthia is meant to "hear" this at some stage, he intends revenge.

### Book III

In Book III the elegiac persona is noticeably more distant from the issues of the poems. We sense that he is no longer inextricably involved in the action he represents, but is able to adopt a more analytical, dispassionate stance.<sup>40</sup> The elegiac speaker no longer appears the irrational prey of vicarious impulse, or the hypocritical exploiter of rhetorical exigency. His attitudes seem less ambiguous, sometimes articulated in terms verging on the prosaic. Perhaps this is the result of Propertius' assumption of the role of vates or haruspex,<sup>41</sup> a role which necessitates an attitude which is unambiguously moral. The immorality of society, its deviance from the traditional moral code, is castigated as the cause of current evils or predicted as the root of future disasters. Foreign luxury is perceived as a moral problem and, as such, is one of the topics we can expect Propertius to treat in this book.

Propertius had not used the term vates at all in Book 1, and in Book 2, though obviously aware of the nationalistic overtones of the word in 2.10.19-20, he also treats it frivolously, as in 2.17.3-4. Propertius does not fit into the mould of vates set out by Virgil and Horace, and is rarely consistent with his terminology. I suspect that his adoption of the word haruspex (not used in Horace) at 3.13.59 is governed by an awareness that he has already missed his chance with vates and is searching for an unusual word which will dispel any doubt as to the change in his role. His treatment of moral issues is helpful in judging to what extent he has changed his focus. To claim that Propertius

was sympathetic to the vates concept but did not understand what it was (so Newman p. 169) is to hypothesise without foundation. I need not emphasise the possibility that Propertius' appropriation of this role lacks sincerity. "Sincerity" is a quality which is extremely difficult if not impossible to recover with confidence from a text. However, I think I can show that Book 3 is characterised by a deliberate effort to abolish ambiguity within the elegist's stance on certain moral issues.

The two texts that illustrate this trend in the book very clearly are 3.7 and 3.13, and it is illuminating to compare both with 2.16.

I shall examine 3.7 first. Although pecunia and men's madness in acquiring it is the elegy's principal focus at the beginning, luxury too is implicit in the poem. The destination of Paetus and his death at sea suggest that his wares were to consist of luxurious articles. From the opening line, the reader is faced with a denunciation of money and its evils in the direct apostrophising of pecunia (3.7.1). Here human vice is acknowledged as a reality, for which pecunia merely provides  
42  
nourishment:

tu vitiis hominum crudelia pabula praebes. (3.7.3)

Compare 2.16.19-22 where, as I have remarked before, vice is somehow indistinguishable from that which "causes" it. Another remarkable feature about 3.7 is that unlike 2.16, which is

addressed to Cynthia, this poem has no fixed addressee: it has as its subject the evils of pecunia and Paetus serves as an illustration of what greed can lead to. Consequently, the rhetorical slant demanded by an address to Cynthia in 2.16, where Propertius is attempting to persuade his love that luxury from another suitor is not to be preferred to the poet's own representations, does not apply in 3.7. Propertius in this poem has nobody specific to convince, and is therefore able to indulge in moralising of a universal nature.

The circumstances of Paetus' passing enable the poet to combine two lines of discourse: a lament for the premature death of a young man, and a denunciation of the reasons that led him to put his life at risk in the first place - desire for wealth. There are, however, many ways of acquiring wealth which do not necessitate a person's taking to the ocean. One can apply one's attention to more efficient management of landed estates (actually alluded to in 3.7.43), or the accumulation of larger properties,<sup>43</sup> or one can entrust one's commercial interests to specialised negotiatores.<sup>44</sup> Such indirect means would hardly provide satisfying material for a moralising exposition, and so Paetus is represented embarking on the voyage himself, thereby falling into the established pattern of luxurious wealth acquired in person.

Paetus is characterised as a man of expensive tastes:

seu thyio thalamo aut Oricia terebintho

est fultum pluma versicolore caput.

(3.7.49-50)



The Greek-style hiatus of thalamo aut (49), the Greek vocabulary,<sup>45</sup> and the reference to the port of Oricos firmly establish the foreign provenance of these items, and Paetus' destination, ad Pharios...portus (3.7.5), communicates the nature of his commercial goals. This is not wealth in the respectable sense, but luxury beyond what is acceptable. There are suggestions, not fully articulated, that Paetus is morally depraved: teneras...manus (3.7.48, cf. attrita...manu of the real nauta in 4.5.50) may simply provide a pathetic contrast with duro...fune (3.7.48) implying Paetus' discomfort with unaccustomed manual labour, or perhaps it signifies Propertius' affection for the deceased man; but followed as the line is by a list of luxurious bedroom furniture (3.7.49-50) it could have an effeminate resonance (cf. also the homosexual myth alluded to in lines 21-24, and cp. Phanocles Erot. 5 Powell p. 108).

In the central part of the poem the stability of honest rusticity and labour serves, within the conservative Roman framework, to accentuate the violence of seafaring depicted in the previous lines (3.7.35-42),<sup>46</sup>

quod si contentus patrio bove verteret agros,  
verbaque duxisset pondus habere mea,  
viveret ante suos dulcis conviva Penatis,  
pauper, at in terra nil nisi fleret opes. (3.7.43-46)

Apart from the traditionalism of the small-holding and household

gods, the adjective contentus reveals a moral concern. One has only to recall the opening of Horace's first Satire, "Qui fit...ut nemo.../.../contentus vivat...?" (1.1.1-3), and that poet's inclusion of the mercator (1.1.6) in his list of insane occupations, to realise that we are being presented with a similar idea here. Dissatisfaction with what one has ("...cui sua terra parum est" 3.7.34) and greed for more than is sufficient ("natura insidians pontum substravit avaris" 3.7.37) is the cause of death at sea. Pauper and opes stand at either pole of an axis (3.7.46), but they do not really represent two extremes in Propertius' account. Rather paupertas here is practically synonymous with pietas (patrio bove 3.7.43, suos...Penates 3.7.45), one of the fundamental Roman virtues, and seems to imply moderate enjoyment (dulcis conviva 3.7.45), not poverty in the negative sense of that word.<sup>47</sup> Opes, on the other hand, is depicted as inevitably destructive, and it implies luxurious wealth.

The poem proceeds as a moral diatribe, a common feature in<sup>48</sup> laments for those who have died at sea, with none of the usual implications foreign luxury holds for the poet's erotic construct. When Propertius does, at the very end of the poem (3.7.72), acknowledge the erotic aspect we have come to expect from the previous two books, it hardly convinces the reader of its relevance to the earlier part of the elegy.

Like 3.7 and unlike 2.16, elegy 3.13 is not addressed to Cynthia and the verbal form quaeritis (3.13.1) conventionally serves to<sup>49</sup> introduce a general reflection. In fact, the addressee in this

case is of no importance, because the statements made in the poem on the subject of women, luxury, fidelity and piety are clearly perceived to have general validity. Cynthia - or the elegiac persona's own erotic experience so painstakingly accumulated in the last two books - need not be relevant to this poem because it can stand alone as an exercise on a topic immediately recognisable within the tradition of Roman moralising we examined in the first Chapter.

At a first reading, 3.13 may appear to offer an almost identical treatment of the same topic as 2.16, but on closer analysis subtle yet significant differences become apparent. As mentioned above, personal jealousy or fear are absent from 3.13: no Cynthia, no rival suitor is expressly mentioned.<sup>50</sup> In 2.16, though perhaps implied by words and phrases like praeda (2.16.2), "semper...mittit me quaerere gemmas" (2.16.17), vitiis...tuis (2.16.32), the vice of avaritia is nowhere expressly identified, and as transpired from my analysis of that elegy earlier, the poet elects instead to castigate merx and periurium in an erotic "contract".<sup>51</sup> In 3.13, however, Propertius is more direct, isolating the vice from the first line, avidis...puellis (3.13.1), where the plural puellis, once the rest of the poem has been read, does suggest that Propertius is distressed by a trait in female society as a whole, and not simply his own affair. As in 2.16, the culprit is discovered to be wealth imported from foreign localities, only in 3.13 the relationship between vice and luxury is expressed with a clarity verging on a theoretical axiom:

certa quidem tantis causa et manifesta ruinis:

luxuriae nimium libera facta via est. (3.13.3-4)

Words like causa and manifesta give the statement a "scientific" ring, while ruinis resounds with the fall of cities blighted and deserted by the gods. <sup>52</sup> Luxuriae, nimum libera, and <sup>53</sup> via all have ethical connotations for the Roman ear. The examples of luxurious articles listed subsequently are saturated with foreignness both by the non-Latin vocabulary for such items, concha (3.13.6), cinnamon (3.13.8), and the exotic resonance of suitable adjectives, Inda...formica (3.13.5 - alluding, of course, to the fantastic story in Herodotus 3.102) which serves to compound the otherness of a material not exclusively foreign, namely gold (Rubro...salo (3.13.6), Tyros...Cadmea (3.13.7), pastor...Arabs (3.13.8)). Against such bellicose instruments of corruption, the pudicitia of even the most determined matrona is defenceless (3.13.9-11). Propertius is aware of the threat this poses to the nation as a whole: nostra per ora (3.13.12).

In 2.16 a similar, but less patriotic, realisation of this crisis had led to the poet's naive fantasy of transposing himself to the past (2.16.19-22). There are no such unobtainable wishes in 3.13, rather two observations. The first one (3.13.15-22) depicts a society which practises an extreme version <sup>54</sup> of a virtue in which the Romans of the present era are found to fall distressingly short - fidelity ensured even unto death. In fact, by implication, the Romans practise the opposite extreme. The ironic twist to this paragon of behaviour is that it is practised by the

very people who are the source of, if not synonymous with, luxurious imports. The irony has to be deliberate or Propertius would not have drawn attention to the Indians in connection with exotic luxury earlier (cf. 3.13.5). The reader is thus presented with an amusing paradox: the ultimate purveyors of demoralising wealth are at the same time upholders of moral values that are fully tested by their actions and, in spirit at least, values for which the conservative Roman ought to feel sympathy.

The second observation concerns a description of a rustic utopia which supposedly existed in the remote past (quondam 3.13.25). It was a time when pietas dominated people's relations with each other and with higher beings: divinities conversed with men (3.13.41-46), as opposed to their present desertion (3.13.47). In place of luxuria, Propertius depicts simpler articles as items of valued exchange in that idealised pre-urban world (3.13.26-32). The choice of language in this passage is interesting, because certain adjectives connote luxury and sophistication although the objects they are attached to do not, and so they seem somewhat inappropriate. The semantic properties of puniceis (3.13.28) are obvious; versicoloris (3.13.32) was the same adjective used of a peacock pillow at 3.7.50; lucida (3.13.30) is a rather unusual description of lilia since it is usually employed with harder materials.<sup>55</sup> With regard to quinces, there is no metrical prohibition of the more latinised cotonea in place of the Greek-sounding Cydonia (3.13.27).<sup>56</sup> Though this may seem oxymoronic, it successfully conveys an impression of value in items which are ostensibly trivial. It also serves to undermine Propertius'

utopian view of the past, since gifts have always been a prerequisite for enjoying a girl's favours (oscula...empta 3.13.34).

Elegy 3.13 transcends previous treatments of luxury in that it has a more ambitious range of concern. In the final section of the poem (3.13.47-66) Propertius speaks in his capacity as haruspex for his patria (3.13.59), and consequently the issue becomes the grander one of pietas. Traditional Roman institutions (pietas, fides, iura, lex, pudor - the very foundations of the national structure) are observed to be subordinate to luxurious wealth (here represented by aurum, 3.13.48,49,50). Transgressions of pietas lead to destruction, illustrated by history (Brennus, 3.13.51-54), and myth (Polydorus 3.13.55-56, Eriphyla 3.13.57-58). The consequences of luxury for Rome are clear to Propertius in his role as seer and moral custodian:

frangitur ipsa suis Roma superba bonis. (3.13.60)

The two elegies discussed above constitute Propertius' most unambiguous condemnations of luxury and its effects. I shall now attempt a survey of this topic in the rest of the poems in the book.

As we have observed in other poems, Propertius is not averse to resorting to the language of luxury in order to conjure up an impression of beauty or value.<sup>57</sup> However, in such contexts the signifiers are usually symbolic, eg. Apollo's aurata...lyra (3.3.14) and plectro...eburno (3.3.25),<sup>58</sup> and the description of

the Muses' grotto, a blend of nature and artifice, affixis viridis spelunca lapillis (3.3.27, which might refer to precious stones or emeralds). In each case the substances are divorced from human greed and take on connotations of beauty, value, purity, and incorruptibility. Indulgent use of expensive materials is also appropriate on occasions of a religious or ritualistic tenor. Cynthia's birthday (3.10) offers such an occasion:

inde coronatas ubi ture piaveris aras. (3.10.19)

The force of piaveris defines the manner in which tus is being employed, but the ritualistic nature of the practices begins to wane in the lines that follow:

luxerit et tota flamma secunda domo,  
sit mensae ratio, noxque inter pocula currat,  
et crocino naris murreus ungat onyx.  
tibia nocturnis succumbat rauca choreis,  
et sint nequitiae libera verba tuae,  
dulciaque ingratos adimant convivia somnos. (3.10.20-25)

Only the most Calvinistic would deny a person a treat on his or her birthday (such a phenomenon would not seem to be culturally limited), and by Roman practice Cynthia is entitled to a birthday party.<sup>59</sup> However, there are indications of excess in these lines: the prolonged lateness of the festivities (noxque...currat 3.10.21, "tibia nocturnis succumbat rauca choreis" 3.10.23, where

rauca may connote "hoarseness" associated with uninterrupted playing (cf. the use of raucus of the declamatory epicist Cordus in Juvenal Sat. 1.3), and the striking accumulation of luxurious vocabulary in 3.10.22: crocino, murreus, onyx.<sup>60</sup> Terms like nequitiae and libera (3.10.24) do nothing to dispel the impression of wantonness. This is all the more noticeable after the fairly formalised rituals described in lines 2-20: the clapping of hands (3.10.4), prayer and offerings to the gods (3.10.12,19), washing (3.10.13), the dressing and oiling of hair (3.10.14), the donning of appropriate raiment (3.10.15), a<sup>61</sup> garland of flowers (3.10.16). The solemn sanctity of the closing lines of the elegy (sacra ministra 3.10.30, sollemnia 3.10.31) are reminiscent of an epithalamium (or rather an elegiac rendering of it) and the birthday celebration is discarded.

Most of the other treatments of riches and luxury conform generally with those expressed in 3.7 and 3.13, though they are usually incorporated into the elegiac construct, rather in the manner we have become accustomed to in Books 1 and 2. Elegies 3.4 and 3.5 constitute a pair devoted to the relationship between military negotium and the acquisition of exotic wealth. The coupling of the two elegies is ensured by the similarity of the opening words of both: Arma deus Caesar dites... (3.4.1) and Pacis Amor deus est...(3.5.1). The Augustan expedition to the East envisaged by Propertius is evaluated initially by the<sup>62</sup> material wealth it will bring those who participate: magna, viri, merces (3.4.3), and the reminders in dites...Indos (3.4.1), gemmiferi...maris (3.4.2) - it almost reads like a poster calling for volunteers. Yet simultaneously, Propertius



undermines his own patriotic tone by ingenuously (or cynically) revealing booty as the true goal. The poet will watch the triumph from the safety of his mistress' lap (3.4.15). In 3.5, Propertius asserts that despite the fact that Amor is the god of Peace, he personally is constantly engaged in erotic squabbles (3.5.2). Unlike the campaigners of 3.4, who for their efforts can at least look forward to glory and wealth at the end of the expedition, Propertius' warfare yields none of the usual material advantages (3.5.3-6). Not that, ostensibly at least, these are regarded by Propertius as advantages at all. One gains the impression that Propertius is just as anxious to announce that even in a state of "real" (as opposed to "erotic") otium, he does not indulge in luxurious living. In fact the erotic paradigm for the poet's life introduced in the first two lines of the elegy is swiftly dropped, and the new moralistic persona of the poet takes over. The material comforts enjoyed by others are rejected (nec 3.5.3,4,5,6) and the foreign provenance of some of them does not escape remark, inviso...auro (3.5.3), e gemma divite (3.5.4), <sup>63</sup>Campania pinguis (3.5.5), aera..., Corinthe, tua (3.5.6). The inevitability of death (3.5.13-18) makes acquisition of such <sup>64</sup>property meaningless.

Elegy 3.18 bears some resemblance to 3.7 in that it combines a lament for the death of a young man (Marcellus) with castigation of the setting of his death. In respect of the latter, Propertius is fortunate in that the place is Baiae, which enables him to exploit connotations over and above the obvious one that it was responsible for Marcellus' death:

at nunc invisae magno cum crimine Baiae. (3.18.7 )

Propertius has had occasion to mention the site with opprobrium before (1.11.1,27,30), and though Cynthia is not an issue in this poem, the reputation of Baiae for immoral behaviour, transferred to the very topography (cf. the apostrophe in vestra...aqua 3.18.8), remains unchallenged. The mention of wealth in this elegy is appropriate to any contemplation of death, as a reminder of the ultimate insignificance of such property:

Attalicas supera vestis, atque omnia magnis

gemmea sint ludis: ignibus ista dabis. (3.18.19-20)

There are three poems in Book 3 that persist in treating luxury in much the same way as it was treated in Books 1 and 2. In 3.6, the fact that Cynthia neglects her cosmetics (3.6.11-14, Fedeli 3.6.11,14,13,12) is perceived by Propertius as a sign of mourning, relying on the suspicion that cosmetics somehow mask the psyche of the loved one.<sup>65</sup> Elegies 3.12 and 3.20 are both treatments of a lover who has departed Rome to acquire wealth, with somewhat unexpected results. In 3.12 we are informed that, surprisingly, Postumus' Galla does not want her lover to leave: "ne faceres Galla multa rogante tua " (3.12.4), despite the fact that Postumus is bound for an eastern campaign and 3.4 has already advertised the profitability of such an enterprise. Propertius' attempts to reassure Postumus may be sincere and effective, but his reiteration of certain dangers could also engender unease in the addressee, and suspicion in the latter

regarding Propertius' real intentions:

si fas est, omnes pariter pereatis avari,  
et quisquis fido praetulit arma toro! (3.12.5-6)

(a clear unification of arma and avaritia)

ter quater in casta felix, o Postume, Galla!  
moribus his alia coniuge dignus eras (3.12.15-16)

(insistence is not necessarily truth,<sup>66</sup> and in elegiac discourse protestations of chastity and accusations of infidelity cannot be trusted implicitly)

quid faciet nullo munita puella timore,  
cum sit luxuriae Roma magistra suae? (3.12.17-18)

(how rhetorical is this question, especially once the reader has read the poem immediately following this one?).

Elegy 3.20 hinges upon an almost identical situation, except that here the addressee is the unspecified female who has been abandoned by her lover. The latter must be understood to be on some commercial business out of Italy:

tantine, ut lacrimas, Africa tota fuit? (3.20.4)

Virtually the same line of argument is adopted in this elegy as

in 3.12:

durus, qui lucro potuit mutare puellam! (3.20.3) <sup>67</sup>

except that references to fidelity are cunningly avoided. Here lies the irony, of course, and in a sense elegiac discourse is blatantly exploded. It is also the obvious solution to the elegiac persona's self-inflicted dilemma: if faced with competition from richer men, he has an opportunity to fill the spaces they must necessarily leave behind in order to acquire wealth. Fidelity to Cynthia has been forgotten.

It will perhaps be appropriate to end with a light-hearted poem. Elegy 3.14 is a male fantasy indulged under the guise of respect for naturalness and beauty unspoiled by cosmetics (cf. 1.2, 2.18C). As in 3.13.15-22 Rome is advised that she could benefit by adopting the customs of other cultures, so here the lex Spartana is admired:

quod si iura fores pugnasque imitata Laconum,  
carior hoc esses tu mihi, Roma, bono (3.14.33-34)

although Spartan frugality is hardly the issue here. The abolition of luxurious clothing from women allows a more titillating view:

nec Tyriae vestes errantia lumina fallunt,  
est neque odoratae cura molesta comae. (3.14.27-28)

The adjective Tyriae (27) gives the impression that Propertius objects to the garments because of their decadent nature and obscures the simple fact that he would like the girl to be completely naked. Propertius has wickedly turned a common moralising technique to immoral ends, since Spartan customs were frequently admired by respectable Romans.<sup>68</sup> Propertius plays Cato with elegiac humour.

## Book IV

Poem 4.1 seems to announce that Propertius has turned over a new leaf. The last two elegies of Book 3 contained an air of finality. The elegiac persona, saturated to the point of indignation with the falsa...fiducia (3.24.1) of his loved one, commits himself to Mens Bona, admittedly an abstraction (si qua dea est, 3.24.19). Realisation of the ridiculousness of his slave-like predicament (3.25.1-3) induces the poet to conclude his book with a curse. The poetry of love has become a vehicle for imprecation:

has tibi fatalis cecinit mea pagina diras:

eventum formae disce timere tuae! (3.25.17-18)

Even without evidence of a time-lapse between the publication of Book 3 and Book 4 (at least 16 B.C. for the latter),<sup>69</sup> the change in tone and subject matter apparent in the first seventy lines of 4.1 would suggest that Propertius has completely redirected the focus of his elegy, and is at last addressing the type of material he has been promising or alluding to through Books 2 and 3. However, as often in Propertius, one should beware of intentions expressed in the initial stages of a poem or book, since the text will frequently change course, sometimes with deliberate brusqueness, sometimes with painstaking subtlety.

The aetiological survey of 4.1.1-70, which at first glance seems to announce new subject-matter,

sacra diesque canam et cognomina prisca locorum:

has meus ad metas sudet oportet equus. (4.1.69-70)<sup>70</sup>

alludes, as we might expect, to the simplicity and rustic<sup>71</sup> wholesomeness of ancient Roman institutions and landmarks. Some of the images with which the poet presents us are almost too quaint, faintly comical in their boorishness,<sup>72</sup> suggesting that Propertius is not thoroughly serious here, and indeed some sort of derision from the reader is anticipated: nec fuit opprobrio (4.1.6), and "sanguinis altricem non pudet (if Fedeli is correct in preferring this to putet) esse lupam" (38). However, Propertius does not develop his comparisons of old and new into an explicit castigation of escalating sophistication and importation of non-Roman commodities. The closest he comes to acknowledging the invasion of luxury are his statements that the theatre did not exist at that time (with its sinuosa vela, 15), that saffron was not used (16), foreign gods were not worshipped ("nulli cura fuit externos quaerere divos", 17 - the combination of cura with quaerere suggests a mania for such divinities in contemporary Roman society), and divinities were chastely poor (21), content with humble offerings (22). Propertius' statements in the first half of 4.1 do correspond in some measure with the idealistic nostalgia for a world free from avidity and wealth which he has expressed elsewhere, but elegiac love is not the context nor the reason for his reverie here.

On several occasions in Book 4 the mention of costly items can be explained by their employment in a metaphorical or ritualistic

context, eg. Vertumnus in a Coan garment is simply one of his possible manifestations (4.2.23); Propertius is permitted to speak figuratively of the value of his poetic offering (4.6.3-8 cf. 3.3.25-28); the sacred grove of the Bona Dea is suitably decked out with puniceae...vittae (4.9.27). The effeminate stage in Hercules' life is briefly alluded to (4.9.47-52), but it is strange that Propertius does not weave into his love-story of Tarpeia (4.4) the old, and one would have thought attractive, tradition of her greed for gold.<sup>73</sup> Such a combination would provide a convenient mythical illustration of the destruction which follows the unholy alliance of love and money. It is principally in the erotic poems of the book that references to luxury are conspicuous.

Scholars have generally recognised 4.3 as representing a situation very like the one in 3.12.<sup>74</sup> Arethusa's letter may conceivably approximate in sentiment to Galla's lamentations (3.12.1 plorantem...Gallam). The plight of the female addressee in 3.20 is also essentially the same. All three women have been abandoned by their lovers for the sake of some military or commercial negotium. Elegy 4.3, however, displays another innovation on the topic. In 3.12 and 3.20 the poet had done the speaking (to the male and female respectively), but the entire elegy of Book 4 comprises the abandoned Arethusa speaking in propria persona without direct comment or interruption by the poet. Propertius has removed himself from the scene, so to speak,<sup>75</sup> and as a result, some of the complexities that his participation usually entails are also absent.<sup>76</sup> Here there are only two people involved: Arethusa and her target for persuasion,



Lycotas.

Many of the features of her letter seem self-consciously  
pathetic, even suspiciously so;<sup>77</sup> Arethusa is almost too good to  
be true, but she fulfils the male's expectations of the faithful  
wife awaiting her husband's return. Lycotas' motives for going on  
his expedition to the East are not enunciated in any detail by  
Arethusa. Her request,

ne, precor, ascensis tanti sit gloria Bactris,  
raptave odorato carbasa lina duci. (4.3.63-64)

is virtually a repeat of Propertius' question to Postumus in  
3.12.3-4,

tantine ulla fuit spoliati gloria Parthi,  
ne faceres Galla multa rogante tua?

A campaign in the East satisfies the Roman soldier's thirst for  
both gloria and praeda of value.<sup>78</sup> The inclusion of linen in line  
63, in the somewhat pleonastic phrase carbasa lina,<sup>79</sup> is  
appropriate to booty obtained in Bactria and the Far East, since  
its associations with India are unambiguous.<sup>80</sup> In a country where  
everyone wears garments of fine linen, the garments of a native  
dux might be expected to be even more sumptuous.<sup>81</sup> The spoil is  
thus rendered precious on several counts: the distance of its  
source, the nature of the fabric, the original status of its  
vanquished owner, and the consequent exceptional quality of an

already valued commodity.

Arethusa's plea (4.3.63-66) implies that her lover's safety is more important than peer-status, more valuable than booty obtained from exotic sources. With respect to the latter, Arethusa demonstrates her indifference under her current anguished circumstances:

nam mihi quo Poenis ter purpura fulgeat ostris  
crystallusque meas ornet aquosa manus? (4.3.51-52)

The material things that love elegy has informed us women esteem (eg. 3.13.1-2, 2.24A.11-16) do not warrant attention from Arethusa while she is without her loved one. Her attitude reminds us of Propertius, no longer charmed by his customary enjoyments in the face of exclusion from Cynthia's presence (2.16.33-34). For this attitude we have only her word, but her statements do not imply that she is not gratified by luxurious items under normal conditions. In fact, if this were the case, her protestation that she takes no joy in fine clothes and jewellery would be without point, and consequently would have no rhetorical force. Rather, her statements communicate her loneliness and depression. Perhaps we are also to detect in this an additional suggestion from Arethusa that she is preserving her chastity. Propertius has already established the relationship between luxury, female cupidity and infidelity. Elegy 4.5 is going to remind us of that truth. By communicating her current lack of interest in such commodities she tactfully assures her husband of her resistance to seduction by munera from would-be

suitors. Arethusa's emphasis omnia surda tacent (4.3.53) will be echoed by Propertius himself when in a similar situation (4.8.47 "cantabant surdo, nudabant pectora caeco"). In both elegies, temptation, either sought or incidental, fails to succeed.

It can be seen then that Arethusa's inclusion of items of luxury in this elegy is regulated by her goal of persuading Lycotas of the sincerity of her chastity (cf. marita fides 4.3.11, "incorrupta mei conserva foedera lecti" 4.3.69, the latter exploiting the rhetorical gambit of assuring the addressee of her own fidelity by expressing concern for his);<sup>82</sup> veiled accusation thus operates as a successful alleviator of unease anticipated in one's partner. Her statements encapsulate the elegiac ideal of the lonely yet faithful wife, and can only be fully appreciated, along with the ironic possibilities, if the reader has internalised the information on this topic from the poems of the last three books.

Just as 4.3 depicted the familiar situation of lovers separated (cf. 2.19, 3.12, 3.20), so elegy 4.5 returns to a topic well-treated in previous poems, the threat posed to elegiac love by luxury and greed, but, like 4.3, presents it in a new way. Unlike 4.3, the elegiac persona is now involved in the text. A considerable portion of the elegy (4.5.21-62) is occupied by the direct speech of Acanthis the lena (compare the same ethopoical technique in 4.3), but it is the poet who introduces her with a curse and a descriptio (4.5.1-20), and concludes the elegy with another descriptio and a curse (4.5.63-78). More than that, the

persona is not objective towards the contents of the elegy. As the curses suggest, he has an emotional stake in the events of the text, and there are a number of references to damage caused him or proposed by the lena.<sup>83</sup> The lena, on the other hand, seems more concerned with the general application of her advice, except that most of what she says could be applied to the hapless poet, and the empty drivel she quotes (4.5.55-56) as exemplifying the kind of verse a girl cannot find any use for (quid nisi verba,<sup>84</sup> 4.5.54) happens to be a direct citation from Propertius.

However, as the contents and tone of the lena's speech imply, Propertius is not immediately present, and the physical absence of the poet enables one woman to speak to another woman in confidence. In effect, Propertius lifts the lid off feminine wiles, listens in on a private conversation to discover the lena instructing her charge with a directness unfettered by any male presence. The lena's speech reminds us of characters in comedy and mime (especially Herondas 1), only there is no dialogue. In fact there is no reaction from her supposed addressee at all, merely Propertius' reaction to her statements.

As noted above, Propertius spends the first twenty lines of the elegy describing the nature of the lena. His reaction to her is one of condemnation and hyperbole. Her characteristics are entirely negative.<sup>85</sup>

Acanthis' speech reads as a straightforward piece of advice: "if you want luxurious items, you have to do the following things". The protasis si te...iuvat (4.5.21) locates the choice with the

addressee, making her responsible for her own behaviour. As in other elegies (eg. 2.16.19-22), the elegiac persona has conceptualised the vice of cupidity as something external to his loved one. It is not that his love is avara, it is the luxurious items which are the problem, or in this case the lena who is expendable, and can be liquidated conveniently at the end of the poem (4.5.65-78). Acanthis' exposition of the matter displays a different (because it is a woman's?) view of the relationship between luxury and immoral behaviour. In place of the theory that luxury causes immorality by its seduction of the psyche, she avers that desire for luxury necessitates a deliberate adoption of a particular mode of behaviour: "si te...iuvat etc....sperne fidem etc...." (4.5.21-27). The view would seem to be a more cynical female alternative to the traditional and rather naive male one.

The list of luxurious items (4.5.21-26) is long and detailed. The exotic provenance of all the goods is underlined with a deliberateness unusual even in Propertian elegy. Every single commodity is labelled with an adjective or connected with a noun which asserts its geographical origin, and they all hail from the East.<sup>86</sup> The catalogue is a familiar one, and comprises all the basic luxuries Propertian elegy has established as valued by women: gold, pearls, fine cloth, trinkets (?) (venalia, 25), and vases. The exotic tags on the goods serve to advertise them and render them more attractive.

Predictably, the acquisition of such treasures necessitates the

rejection of virtues recognised as profoundly Roman, fides (27), iura (28), pudicitia (28), and the embracing of nefarious (though not necessarily foreign) practices, impiety (provolvete deos, 27), lies (mendacia vincant, 27). Successful exploitation of the emotional situation prescribes deception and pretence.<sup>87</sup> The lena's advice rests firmly on expediency,<sup>88</sup> which, is of course, uncompromisingly unelegiac. The "historical" personage recommended as worthy of imitation is not the frank and compulsive Medea (41-42), but the hard-to-afford and therefore desirable courtesan Thais (43-44),<sup>89</sup> who belongs to the sophisticated world of an alternative view of love (mundi...Menandri, 43). The preference for the love affairs of comedy over those of tragedy with their horrific consequences is significant. Medea's filicide is not described here, but the notoriety of her actions surely renders their association unavoidable. Better to take love less seriously and be a comica moecha where only slaves are tricked (44), than to commit insane actions because of unrequited passion.

In 2.16.15, Propertius had shuddered at the possible reality underlying sexual relationships: love in exchange for money. In his view, a girl who reduced love to commerce was bound to suffer some sort of dire consequence (2.16.16), but he was vague on this issue. Acanthis seems blissfully unaware of any moral problem or negative effect arising from a mercantile attitude to love. She makes ample and unabashed use of the language of trade in her speech.<sup>90</sup> That most awful challenge to the elegiac poet's erotic construct, the indiscriminate acceptance of any lover who can afford the pleasure (quivis, 2.16.15), is blatantly prescribed by

the lena, and in such uncompromising terms as to be almost comical ("aut quorum titulus per barbara colla pependit", 4.5.51). It is difficult not to interpret in a humorous light an attitude which is so opposed to the elegiac poet's ideals, so inflammatory as to elicit a strong reaction from him (1-20, 63-78). By way of summary, Acanthis enjoins:

91

aurum spectato, non quae manus afferat aurum! (4.5.53)

The lena is no more sympathetic to amatory verse (54-57). Her advice undermines the entire purpose of love elegy, by emasculating erotic verse of its rhetorical efficacy:

qui versus, Coae dederit nec munera vestis,  
 istius tibi sit surda sine arte (Barber: aere Fedeli) lyra.  
 (4.5.57-58)

If 4.5.55-56 is a genuine couplet, the idea has emphatic point for Propertius' standing as a writer of erotic elegy. Unfortunately, we are not provided with a response to this advice from the amica, but perhaps that is significant. The manner of the amica's reception of the lena's instructions is not permitted by the poet to enter the text ("animum nostrae...versat...amicae", 4.5.63, is all we are told). However, the strength of his reaction and his unloading of the blame on Acanthis alone are an indication of the unease he feels at the ramifications of the lena's advice for the erotic construct of elegy.

The lena is not seen to have recourse to any sort of magical or necromantic arts in her education of the amica, despite Propertius' claims in lines 11-18. In light of this, the poet's description of her (1-20) is rendered somewhat hysterical, his crazed delight in her unpleasant demise (67-74) naively wishful. His refusal to acknowledge the possible cupidity of his loved one as the source of the problem succeeds in giving the poem a pleasantly ironic tone. The lena's only "magic" is her feminine honesty and common sense.

There is a cunning shift from an aetiological programme to a more conventionally erotic one in 4.8. This is achieved through the inclusion of a descriptive prologue on a rite at the town of Lanuvium (3-14) in the plot of an anecdote involving Cynthia and the poet. The danger of disunity in transferring from one poetic mode to another is cleverly avoided by Propertius' somewhat mysterious invitation to his audience to listen:

Disce, quid Esquilias hac nocte fugarit aquosas,  
cum vicina novis turba cucurrit agris (4.8.1-2)

and his making Lanuvium the destination of a supposed (yet unlikely) pilgrimage by Cynthia,

huc mea detonsis avecta est Cynthia mannis:  
causa fuit Iuno, sed mage causa Venus. (4.8.15-16) <sup>92</sup>

The aetiological section is consequently integrated with the rest



of the elegy. Cynthia's appearance in this sacral context is successfully ironic, once the virginal tenor of the place and its rite have been established.

While Cynthia is away with a young rival (21-26), the poet tries to have a private party of his own (27-48). Once again, Cynthia's infidelity is given a luxurious setting. Sullivan sees the reintroduction of a situation which is highly reminiscent of the praetor ab Illyricis elegy (2.16),<sup>93</sup> but I think that analogy is misleading in detail. The vulsus nepos of 4.8.23 does not have the masculine military image of the praetor figure. Though he poses the same threat in the material benefits he appears to offer, he is more like the spoiled young play-boy one finds in Horace Sat.1.2.48 ff.<sup>94</sup> His depilation smacks of effeminacy, while the noun nepos may connote a spendthrift or prodigal character.<sup>95</sup> The squandering of one's inheritance is a semantic property of the word (cf. Cic. Agr. 1.1.2 "in populi Romani patrimonio nepos"), and this would seem to be the implication of Propertius' use of the term here. This rival has not acquired his wealth on military campaigns. In a sense, Propertius' objection to the character of his rival rests on more traditional foundations. The filius luxuriosus is a stock figure in comedy and moralistic rhetoric, and is generally a target for castigation with varying degrees of seriousness and indulgence, depending on how comic the context is, or the standpoint of the speaker.

In a brief sketch, the poet determines the luxurious nature of the couple as reflected in their mode of travel. The silk

curtains of the carriage (4.8.23), the hounds of exotic breed (4.8.24) with their jewelled collars (armillatos, 24), serve to undermine the professed intention of the journey to Lanuvium. The significance of the carpenta (4.8.23) remains problematic. The Lex Oppia (215 B.C.), and the debate accompanying its eventual repeal in 195 B.C. (see Chapter I), testifies to the Roman feeling that travel by women in wheeled conveyances was to be classified with other forms of undesirable luxury, unless the practice was justified by performance of, or attendance at, some religious ceremony.<sup>96</sup> However there is no certainty as to what effect the repeal of the Lex Oppia had on the use of carriages by women in Rome and Italian towns, and especially the carpentum.<sup>97</sup> Presumably, at all times, use of vehicles was permitted for travelling from town to town. Precision on this issue would appear impossible at present, but it can at least be affirmed that the carpentum was a special sort of carriage, one with religious and processional associations.<sup>98</sup> This is the only occasion where Propertius employs the word, and since a number of more neutral nouns for carriages were available to him (eg. raeda, biga, cisium), this selection must serve to emphasise the frivolous and audacious mentality of its drivers.<sup>99</sup>

At this point, Propertius leaves the happy couple and embarks on a description of the party he set up for himself to ease his depression. It is interesting that in order to avoid one extreme (suicidal dejection), the poet indulges in another. His scenario is distinctly unelegiac.<sup>100</sup> To fill the place of his single love Cynthia, Propertius invites not one woman, but two, whose

characters, we are informed, become more unrestrained the more they drink (4.8.29-32).<sup>101</sup> The setting for the love-making is a parody of the idealised locus eroticus of pastoral,

unus erat tribus in secreta lectulus herba.

quaeris concubitus? inter utramque fui. (4.8.35-36)

The luxurious nature of the equipment of the gathering is unmistakable: special drinking cups (cyathos 4.8.37), glassware (vitrique aestiva supellex, 37), imported wine ("Methymnaei Graeca saliva meri, 38 - emphatically Greek, if the reading Graeca of most of the manuscripts, accepted by both Barber and Fedeli,<sup>102</sup> is correct), a pipe-player from Egypt, the decadent clack of the crotalistria (39), and showers of rose petals (40). In addition to the characters already mentioned, Lygdamus is in attendance, and a dwarf plays a tune on a box-wood pipe (4.8.41-42).<sup>103</sup> Presumably the deformity of the latter along with his instrument is supposed to conjure up the image of Pan, a satyr, or Faunus, another perversion of the pastoral setting.

The visual senses, those of taste, those of sound, and the personal dynamics of the scene, all contribute to a sensation that is distinctly un-Roman (by "Roman", of course, I mean that which is traditionally proclaimed as acceptable or laudable behaviour from Roman citizens). Though Propertius' entertainments do not convey the same sense of expense as the apparel with which the nepos is furnished, they are sufficiently foreign to demonstrate that the poet may contemplate such behaviour when the elegiac construct collapses - a phenomenon we have seen

operating on a number of occasions. Ironically, here as elsewhere, the sincerity of the elegiac persona's frequent castigation of luxurious vice may with justification be called into question by the reader.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1) For the same or similar clothing cf. 2.1.5-6, 2.3.15; also Hor. Sat. 1.2.101-102, Seneca Mai. Contr. 2.7.4, neither of which is particularly complimentary.

2) In Juvenal Sat. 3.62 the Syrus...Orontes is hardly better than sewage, while Prop. 2.23.21-22 "...quas mihi misit Orontes, / me iuerint..." clearly refers to girls of easy virtue.

3) Camps claims (1961: 46) that muneribus cannot mean "gifts" but must have some extended sense like "finery". However, since the spectre of the rival lover lurks behind this finery, "gifts" is probably correct as the sense. They recur with sufficient frequency in the Monobiblos to be acknowledged as a subject that occupies the poet's consciousness, cf. his own non-commercial munera 1.3.25; also: quamvis magna daret, of another suitor (1.8B.37), Alcinoi munera (1.14.24).

4) A number of meanings are possible for the word cultus: 'good manners' and 'sophistication' are among them. The phrase mercato...cultu (5) suggests that this type of cultus is inferior and more easily obtained than the kind that comes from within, naturaeque decus.

5) Camps (1961) p. 47 thinks that the phrase "litora nativis...picta lapillis" refers metaphorically to sea shells and cites Lucretius 2.375 pingere telluris gremium. However, I feel that the line is more ambiguous than that: lapillus is frequently a synonym for gemma or margarita (cf. Prop. 1.15.7 "pearls", 3.3.27 "emeralds"), and picta can have ornamental or luxurious

connotations (eg. picta...tabella, Hor. Epist. 2.1.97). Thus a conceptual tension is produced between gems in themselves and their natural origins.

6) This passage is reminiscent of the opening of Lucretius' First Book:

aspice quos summittat humus formosa colores (Prop. 1.2.9)

and

...suavis daedala tellus

summittit flores...

(Lucr. DRN 1.7-8)

et volucres nulla dulcius arte canunt (Prop. 1.2.14)

and

aeriae primum volucres te, diva, tuumque

significant initium percussae corda tua vi.

(Lucr. DRN 1.12-13)

In Lucretius, Venus is responsible for the beauty and variety of nature. Although Propertius intends his passage as an illustration of his thesis that nature is superior to art, the spirit of Amor is not far distant.

7) In fact, when one considers that all Propertius' elegies are self-consciously urbane and sophisticated, the sincerity of protestations of simplicity of taste in any area must be questioned.

8) Cf. 1.4.5-6 where Propertius compares Cynthia favourably with Greek heroines of the past.

9) Whether ingenuus color (line 13) means "fair complexion" (Shackleton Bailey 1967 p. 16) or "natural complexion" or "delicate complexion" (Camps 1961: 53), the idea of color being unaided by cosmetics would seem to be unavoidable. Similarly, unless we accept an extraordinary contradiction in the same line, multis decus artibus must refer to something non-external, like grace or cultural accomplishment.

10) Cf. invisae...Baiae (3.18.7), Varro Menip.Sat. fr. 44 (Astbury), and see D'Arms, J. H. (1970), pp. 40-44, esp. p. 43 on pro Caelio 35, "...the mere mention of Baiae contributed effectively to the impression of Clodia's immorality which Cicero was striving to establish."

11) Claims such as these are more appropriate for people bereft of kin, cf. Cat. 68.92-96,

...ei misero frater adempte mihi,  
ei misero fratri iucundum lumen ademptum,  
tecum una tota est nostra sepulta domus,  
omnia tecum una perierunt gaudia nostra,  
quae tuus in vita dulcis alebat amor.

12) Cf. Aristotle's statement ἡδίων ὁ Λέσβιος (sc. than Rhodian) ap. A. Gellius 13.5.9; apparently a wine to relax with and enjoy, cf. Horace Od. 1.17.21-22, "hic innocentis pocula Lesbii/ duces sub umbra" (note how similar the setting is to that in Prop. 1.14.1-2): the verb duces and the adjective innocentis define its use for occasions where overindulgence is not the aim.

For further details on Lesbian wine see Nisbet and Hubbard (1975) p. 225.

13) Cf. Prop. 3.9.13.

14) The river was a symbol of wealth, see Otto, A. (repr. 1971) p. 261

15) Perhaps Propertius is parodying ethical philosophy in line 24: despicere is the attitude required of the sage or truly virtuous man when confronted with abundant wealth, cf. Hor. Od. 2.2.23-24 "...quisquis ingentis oculo irretorto / spectat acervos", Cic. de Off. 1.17, Herodotus of Solon (1.30 ff.).

16) Cf. Odyssey 8.392-445: the Phaeacians become proverbial examples of luxurious living; fine clothing and gold are among the gifts they bestow.

17) Though Enk (1911) p. 73 prefers to read "vidi" with the codices deteriores or Itali (ζ), and cf. line 31 where ζ preserve the correct reading "(A)egyptum". Support for "vidi" might also be found in the similarity of the present situation with Sappho 16.17-18:

τᾶς κε βολλοίμην ἔρατόν τε βᾶμα

κῆμάρυμα λάμπρον ἔδην προσώπω

Prop. 2.1.5: fulgentem -- κῆμάρυμα λάμπρον... προσώπω  
incedere -- ἔρατον... βᾶμα



vidi (Enk) -- ἵδην

18) Butler and Barber (1933) p. 189, Enk (1911) p. 73.

19) The verb incedere lends dignity and beauty to the image, cf. 1.2.1 procedere (which goes some way towards undermining the poet's negative attitude); 2.2.6 incedit - of a walk that is compared favourably with Juno's; Virg. Aen. 1.46-47 incedo - of Juno; Hor. Sat. 2.8.13-14 procedit - used ironically of a fuscus Hydaspes whose gait has the air of an Attica virgo in a religious procession.

20) For bombyx and its Coan origin see Plin. NH 11.23.77.

21) Why Illyricum? There was much activity in the area from Julius Caesar's aborted operations down to Augustus' campaign, and a precedent of long standing for the area's use as a proving ground for aspirant commanders eager to further their own military and political careers, see esp. Appian Illyrike, and Wilkes, J.J. (1969) esp. pp. 13-77. There was booty to be had too: C. Asinius Pollio brought back enough to rebuild the Atrium Libertatis (see Shatzman, I. 1975 p. 305).

22) Notice how frequently gifts occur in this poem : dona (4) offerings to Neptune, munere (9), muneribus (15), dona (18), munus (21), donis...amaris (29).

23) For pearls from the Atlantic cf. Tac. Agr. 12, Aus. Id. 10.68.

24) Cf. Butler and Barber (1933) p. 218, who cite Dion. Hal. 1.79, Plut. Romul. 20 and Ovid Fasti 3.183. Casae are also a

- standard romantic ideal: cf. Baucis and Philemon in Ov. Met. 8.632-633 "...illa / consenuere casa...", and the casula of Simulus and Scybale (a comic reminiscence of the former) in Moretum 60, 66.
- 25) Cf. Mart. 11.8.6, Plin. NH 37.30
- 26) Butler and Barber (1933) p. 231 cite Prop. 2.23.15, Mart. 2.63.2, and CIL VI. 9207, 9221, 9239, 9545-49. Add VI. 9434 and 9435, both gemmarii: 9207 is an aurifex, 9221 a caelator, 9239 a cavator, 9545-46 are margaritarii etc. Many of these artisans have recognisably Hellenistic names. Cf. also Ov. AA. 1.421-434 on travelling salesmen (institores).
- 27) Cf. the Sidoniae...mitrae of 2.29A.15
- 28) See Griffin, J. (1985) p. 34, who comments that Propertius castigates wealth in this poem "...to the end not of correct moral edification, but of making more agreeable and less expensive the life of love"; on the relationship between the situation in this poem and comedy see Hubbard, M. (1974) p. 61.
- 29) Female alcoholism is a favourite topic amongst Roman moralists; cf. Val. Max. 2.1.5, "vini usus olim Romanis feminis ignotus fuit, ne scilicet in aliquod dedecus prolaberentur, quia proximus a Libero patre intemperantiae gradus ad inconcessam venerem esse consuevit."
- 30) Cf. Anacreon 357, Anacreontea (5 Bergk), Ov. AA. 1.237-244, 525-526, 565-600.
- 31) Cf. 1.2.5-14, and the moral resonance of recta.

- 32) Cf. references collected by Barsby, J. (1973) p. 147, and Murgatroyd, P. (1980) on Tibullus p. 246.
- 33) Murgatroyd ibid.
- 34) Cf. Horace's ode on the same event 1.36, and refer to Dio 49.15, 53.1, 3, Aug. RG 4.1, Suet. Aug. 29, Joseph. BJ 2.6.1, V.Pat. 2.81. The careful description of the types of materials used in the construction of the building (notably from Africa and the East) could serve to symbolise Augustus' victory over Antony, Cleopatra, and the Orient.
- 35) Cf. the prominence of Apollo in the initial poems of Book 3, eg. 3.1.7, 3.2.9, 3.3.13-26.
- 36) Cf. Ovid Am. 2.2.26, 2.7.3-4, AA. 1.89-92, and esp. "spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur ut ipsae; / ille locus casti damna pudoris habet" 99-100.
- 37) Cf. "magnis in laudibus tota fere fuit Graecia victorem Olympiae citari, in scaenam vero prodire ac populo esse spectaculo nemini in eisdem gentibus fuit turpitudini. quae omnia apud nos partim infamia, partim humilia atque ab honestate remota ponuntur " Corn. Nep. praef. 5; in Horace Sat. 1.2.58 mimae are mentioned with meretrices as being damaging to one's fama, and Cicero feels he is being daring when he attends a party where Cytheris is present (ad Fam. 9.26.2). See also Griffin, J. (1985) pp. 12-13, and Dupont, F. (1985) pp. 95-98.
- 38) Perhaps elegiac poets make extreme statements of this kind when they become dissatisfied with their relationship, or when

some blatantly comic contravention of the elegiac ideal is desired, cf. Ovid Am. 2.7-8.

39) Note, for example, the coarseness of Cat. 6 (to Flavius), Cat. 56 (to Cato<sup>†</sup> presumably the addressee is shocked in keeping with his name). Even Lyric provides some examples: in Od. 1.27 Horace takes opportunity of the sympotic context to ridicule a companion's loved one (lines 21-24), and in Od. 1.33 he rejects elegiac romanticism in favour of an affair with a libertina (lines 13-16).

40) On occasions, Propertius comes close to offering a deliberate critique of the entire elegiac construct, eg. 3.8, 3.24, 3.25.

41) Vates, that is, in "the strictly Augustan sense of the leader and educator of the people" (Newman, J. K. (1967) p. 153); for Propertius and the vates concept see Newman pp. 167-178. It seems likely that in Book 3 Propertius has been influenced by Horace Od. 1-3, see Hubbard, M. (1974) pp. 72, 86 ff., Sullivan, J. P. (1976) p. 23.

42) Cf. the Stoic idea in Seneca Epist. 87.31, "(Posidonius dicit) divitias esse causam malorum, non quia ipsae faciunt aliquid, sed quia facturos irritant. alia est enim causa efficiens, quae protinus necessest noceat, alia praecedens. hanc praecedentem causam divitiae habent..."

43) For territorial expansion cf. Petron. Sat. 48.2-4, [Quint.] Decl. Mai. 13.2.

44) Professional mercatores were often backed by more dignified members of Roman society: see D'Arms, J. H. (1981) p. 24, and on the "indirect" involvement of Roman senators in trade pp. 45-47.

45) Oricos represented the threat of luxury to Propertius' relationship with Cynthia in 1.8A.20. cf. Virg. Aen. 10.126 Oricia terebintho, Petron. Sat. 33.2 tabula terebinthina.

46) A similar technique can be found in Moschus, but without the same moral focus: dry land and pastoral σχολή are compared with the dangers of the sea (5. 4-13). Cf. also A.P. 7.532 (Isidorus of Aegae) where a farmer comes to grief when he attempts sea-borne trade.

47) For paupertas and its consequent moral rectitude cf. Aesch. Agamem. 772-775

Δίκη δὲ λάμπει μὲν ἐν  
δυσκάπνοις δώμασιν,  
τὸν δ' ἐναΐσιμον τίει

The idea can be exploited conveniently in rhetoric, eg. in [Quint.] Decl. Mai. 13 where the pauper is represented as deliberately choosing to work hard and honestly, and seclude himself from a life of luxury, "...remotus a tumultu civitatis ignobile aevum agere procul ab ambitu et omni maioris fortunae cupiditate constitui..." (2).

48) Cf. the moralising that occurs in sepulchral epigram,

especially when the deceased perished at sea during a trading venture,

Δύσμορε Νικάνωρ, πολὺ μεμκραμμένε πόντῳ,  
κέϊσαι δὴ ξείνῃ γυμνὸς ἐπ' ἡϊόνι,  
ἢ σύ γε πρὸς πέτρῃσι· τὰ δ' ὄλβια κείνα μέλαθρα  
φροῦδα <καὶ ἡ> πάσης ἐλπίς ὄλωλε Τύρου.  
οὐδέ τί σε κτεάνων ἐρρύσατο· φεῦ, ἐλεεινέ,  
ᾧλεο μοχθήσας ἰχθύσι καὶ πελάγει.

A.P. 7.286 (Antipater of Thessalonica)

Also A.P. 7.534 (Automedon of Aetolia) with the ironic repetition of ἔμπορος (lines 4-5).

49) See Camps (1966) p. 115 ad. loc.

50) I am well aware of the possibility that the same circumstances could have motivated the writing of 3.13 as 2.16. In this study, however, I am confining myself to the external features of the poem because of the unreliability of attempts to recover all the ironical possibilities in the text.

51) There is also an implicit link between infidelity and luxuria in 3.12.17-18.

52) Note also Catullus' identification of ease (otium) as a state that ultimately brings on destruction, Cat. 51. 13-16, and Fraenkel's explanation (1957) pp. 211-213.

53) Cf. the use of via at 3.5.10.

54) But not unprecedented in Graeco-Roman mythical experience, eg. Evadne, cited 3.13.24, who died on Capaneus' pyre. On the subject see Heckel, W. and Yardley, J. C. (1981) Philologus 125: 305-311. The suicide of a wife to preserve chastity, or sacrifice of herself for her husband's sake, is also analogous eg. Alcestis, and Xenophon's story of the married Assyrian couple Abradates and Panthea (Cyrop. 6.1-4, 7.1-3).

55) Eg. lucidior glacie Ov. Met. 13.795, "puri lucida mic salis" Ov. Fast. 1.338; especially of precious materials: "crystallo lucidus albo" Ov. fr. 13.1, lucida gemma Ov. Her. 15.74, lucida concha Tib. 2.4.30, and "claris lucente smaragdis" Ov. Met. 2.24, lucet onyx Mart. 12.50.4. More common for lilia are, alba [Tib.] 3.4.33-34, Ov. Fast. 4.442; candida Virg. Aen. 6.709, Ov. Met. 4.355, 5.392; but cf. argentea Prop. 4.4.25.

56) On the resonance of this word cf. its use by Cato de Agr. 7.3 and Varro RR 1.59, and Pliny NH 15.11.37 "...mala quae vocamus cotonea et Graece cydonea" (i.e. cydonia is still felt to be Greek), Macrobius Sat. 7.6.13 "cydonia, quae cotonea vocat Cato".

57) Eg. in communicating the "wealth" of his relationship with Cynthia 1.14.11-12, the beauty of Apollo's temple 2.31.2-12.

58) Cf. the use of ivory on Apollo's temple.

59) Cairns, F. (1971) Hermes 99: 149-55; Genethlios Hemera, in PW vii.1135-49 (Schmidt)

60) Shackleton Bailey (1967) p. 167 has an interesting note on this line and one which suggests that the behaviour depicted is

not in the most conservative of tastes; Fulgentius Myth. 3.8,  
"unde et Petronius Arbiter ad libidinis concitamentum mirrinum se  
poculum bibisse refert; nam et Sutrius comediarum scriptor  
introducitur Gliconem meretricem dicentem: 'Murrinum mihi adfers,  
quo virilibus armis occursem fortiuscula.'"

61) On the general structure and ritualistic topoi of  
genethliaca cf. Van Dam, H-J. (1984) p. 451.

62) The incentive for such an expedition soon takes on a  
patriotic flavour with the reference to glory and revenge (3.4.3-  
10), the depiction of triumph (3.4.13-18), perhaps to reassert  
the usual justifications for such an expedition.

63) All reminiscent of Prop. 3.2.11-14 on magnificent home and  
gardens, cf. Hor. Od. 1.31 and the references collected by N & H  
p. 352.

64) Cf. Hor. Od. 2.3.21-28, Sat. 1.1.95-100, 117-119.

65) Cf. 2.18C; the make-up on Euphiletus' wife in Lysias Or.  
1.14.

66) fido (3.12.6), casta (15), moribus (16), securus (19),  
non...vincent (19), pudica (22), miranda coniuge (23), casta  
(37), fidem (38).



67) Cf. 3.12.20 duritiae tuae, 3.12.5-6 etc.

68) See Rawson, E. (1969) pp. 99-106, and on this elegy p. 108; see also Griffin, J. (1985) p. 34 n. 11.

69) There is agreement on a publication date of not earlier than 16 B.C. for the book as a whole, Butler and Barber (1933) pp. xxvi-xxviii, Camps (1965) p. 1.

70) For "generic" intentions framed in similar metaphors, cf.

Sed tempus lustrare aliis Heliconae choreis,  
et campum Haemonio iam dare tempus equo. (2.10.1-2)

See also Wimmel, W. (1960) pp. 194-95.

71) Eg. collis et herba fuit (4.1.2), concubuerunt (accepted by Fedeli, only V and Vo have procubuerunt), boves (4), fictilibus...deis (5), facta sine arte casa (6), nuda de rupa (7), advena bubus (8), unus...focus (10), "Curia.../pellitos habuit, rustica corda, Patres " (11-12), in prato (14), Vesta...pauper (21), vilia sacra (22), etc.

Cf. 4.10.17-22 on warfare in Romulus' time before the advent of luxurious ostentation in battle.

72) Especially phrases and words which have a ludicrously pompous, oxymoronic, or bathetic quality, eg.

et Tiberis nostris advena bubus erat (8)

qualia creverunt moenia lacte tuo! (56)

73) The version of the story in Propertius would seem to be a Hellenistic variant on the traditional one (as found in Liv. 1.11.6), perhaps instigated by the little-known Simylus (fragments of his are cited by Plutarch in Romul. 17.5), see Hubbard, M. (1974) p. 119.

74) Butler & Barber (1933) p. 337, Hubbard, M. (1974) p. 142, Warden, J. (1980) p. 105 "In a sense the poem can be seen as a dramatisation of the situation described in 3.12".

75) Pillinger, H. E. (1969) p. 176 is right to point to the greater detachment and stylisation of the amatory elegies in Book 4 and to Propertius' reduction to observer rather than participant in 4.3. But I think he errs when he claims (p. 175) that Arethusa's love is of a different order from that expressed by Cynthia and Propertius. Rather Arethusa exemplifies a love which has remained an ideal in Books 1, 2 and 3, and a love which must be recognised as a product of a rhetorical context.

76) In this respect I disagree with Ross (1975) pp. 110-111, who implies that the poet's adoption of the role of active lover is a limitation.

77) The rhetorical insistence on solitariness, the adjective unus, and the exclusively female company, are noticeable: "assidet una soror, curis et pallida nutrix" (4.3.41), una puella (4.3.54), "Craugidos...catulae.../illa tui partem vindicat una tori" (4.3.55-56); also the fatuous adynaton (4.3.45-48) where she wishes that women too might serve on military campaigns as camp-followers. Though one should be careful about being too

cynical, cf. some of Cicero's letters from exile to his wife, (ad Fam. 6-9 Shackleton Bailey) as noted by Hutchinson JRS (1984) 74 p. 101.

78) Cf. the same combination ironically juxtaposed in 3.4.

79) When carbasus refers to a "garment", as opposed to a "sail" or "writing material", it usually connotes an expensive foreign item, appropriate for the dressing of divinities (especially water numina) or wealthy women (see TLL iii.429.57 ff.); it is also special enough to be employed in religious contexts (cf. carbasus as the property of the Vestal Virgin Aemilia in Val. Max. 1.1.7); the incident involving Aemilia is alluded to by Cornelia at 4.11.54, the only other occurrence of the word in Propertius.

80) Cf. Curtius 8.9.18 on the Indian region, "terra lini ferax: inde plerisque sunt vestes", and 8.9.20 "corpora usque pedes carbasa velant...capita linteis vinciunt".

81) Cf. Curtius 8.9.24 on the dress of an Indian king "distincta sunt auro et purpura carbasa".

82) Sullivan's recognition of the importance of marital fides in this elegy is justified (ICS (1984) 9: 33-34), though he neglects to locate it in its rhetorical context, thereby ignoring the ironic possibilities of the text: the circumstances under which it is articulated (the separation of the couple), and its consequent purpose (the persuasion of an absent partner that the facts one is relating, though independently unverifiable, are nevertheless true).

83) Eg. nostro de sanguine (4.5.17), in me (17),  
nostrae...amicae (63), in nostros...dolores (73).

84) Several scholars seem unwilling to accept this quotation into the text. Goold (1967) p. 63 does not see the lines as fitting here, or even intelligible as a quote without modern punctuation marks. The "obvious explanation" according to him is that the interpolated couplet is a gloss on Coae vestis (4.5.57). The couplet, however, is retained by Camps (though he does not in fact commit himself to its retention, 1965 p. 102) and Fedeli, who finds Shackleton Bailey's defence of the lines (PCPhS (1952-53) 182 pp. 16-20) thoroughly convincing. Unfortunately, due to library inadequacies, I have not yet read Sh. B.'s arguments, but I prefer to retain the couplet. To answer some of Goold's objections: as a gloss on Coa vestis it hardly satisfies since it does not amplify the description of the garment (it would be more accurate to term it a "cross-reference", but then there would be no way of preferring a scribal to an intentional inclusion); quotation marks are unnecessary since the quotation comprises the first two lines of a conspicuous poem in the Monobiblos, amounting to a reference to a poetic mode or title (if the lines had come from the middle of some lesser-known elegy, Goold's thesis would be more secure); Propertius' Book 4 does have a retrospective atmosphere; the lines are important in establishing a reason for the personal enmity Propertius feels against the lena.

85) She is docta (4.5.5), not in the complimentary sense, of course, audax (13), cunning (astu, 15), and heartlessly cruel

(immeritas...genas, 16).

86) The poet has striven to lend variety to the orientalism of these goods - no place is repeated : the Far East with its aurea ripa (21, cf. Curtius 8.9.18 "aurum flumines vehunt, quae leni modicoque lapsu segnes aquas ducunt", of India), serves to "exoticise" the geographically neutral gold (cf. a similar device with a more subtle purpose at 3.13.5). Note also the compounding of foreignness by the allocation of more than one indicator of such: "sub Tyria concha...aqua" (4.5.22), "Eurypylique...Coae textura" (23), "murrea...Parthis" (26), and the clarification of the nationality of Thebae by the adjective palmiferae (25), which, though unnecessary in a sequence of places that are Eastern and commercial (Boeotian Thebes hardly qualifies), has the effect of amplifying the city's "otherness".

87) Esp. simulare (29), simules (34), scribe.../ quidlibet (37-38), has artis (38, double meaning), ferit (44), and of course in mores te verte viri (45). The latter is an interesting instruction. In Books 1 and 2 the poet was seen to have adapted his character and behaviour to Cynthia's wishes.

88) Cf. utere (29), utilis (31), utere (60).

89) Cynthia had outdone her in popularity in 2.6.3-4.

90) Pretium (29), mercata pace (32), amplexu...empto (33), Thais pretiosa (43).

91) Cf. the (apparently Polish) maxim, "Don't look at the mantle-piece while you are stoking the fire".

92) The cult of Iuno Sispes Mater Regina was in Lanuvium, see Kl. P. iii, p. 478

93) Sullivan (1976) p. 154

94) And cf. Hor. Sat. 1.4.49 "meretrice nepos insanus amica/  
filius uxorem...recuset."

95) Cf. L & S and OLD s.v. nepos, as well as the words nepotor,  
nepotatus, nepotalis, nepotinus.

96) Cf. Livy 34.1, "ne qua mulier plus semunciam auri haberet  
neu vestimento versicolori uteretur neu iuncto vehiculo in urbe  
oppidove. aut propius inde mille passus nisi sacrorum publicorum  
causa veheretur."

97) According to Livy (5.25.9), the use of the carpentum on both  
festive and ordinary days (profestoque) was originally allowed  
women by the senate as an honour. Scholars disagree as to whether  
the use of carpenta for secular purposes was permitted after the  
repeal of the Lex Oppia: yes, Bömer, F. (1958) ii p. 53; no, D-S  
i.2 p. 926 (Saglio), "L'interdiction fut maintenue même après  
l'abrogation de la loi", Mattingly BMC i p. cxxv, though neither  
faction cites literary evidence to support their belief.

98) Cf. TLL iii.489.71 ff. "pompaticum vehiculi genus,  
praecipue vecturae urbana, rarius itineribus serviens", eg. Ovid  
Fasti 1.619, and especially the use of the carpentum as an honour  
reserved for female relatives of various emperors, eg. Agrippina,  
Suet. Calig. 15, Messalina, Dio 60.22.2, Suet. Claud. 17,  
Agrippina Tac. Ann. 12.42, Dio 60.33.2 whose noun-  
phrase τὸ κερπέντω χρήσασθαι reinforces the thesis that it was

recognised as a special honour. Even coins were struck to commemorate the event, eg. Mattingly, BMC i pp. 130-131 nos. 76-78, Pl. 23.18, illustrating its allocation to Livia.

99) Is the fate foreseen for the nepos in 4.8.25-26 an indiscriminate piece of wishful thinking, or may his service in the arena be a possible punishment for impious use of a vehicle restricted to ritualistic service?

100) This sort of masculine unelegiac solution to an unhappy love affair has come up before, cf. 2.22A, 2.23, and cynically 2.25; compare an alternative and more subdued reaction in 2.16.33-34, cf. also Hor. Od. 2.11.13-24; of course, the dénouement to Propertius' attempt at sordidness in 4.8 fails miserably and he ends up in an emotional state similar to that described in 2.16 ("cantabant surdo, nudabant pectora caeco", 4.8.47).

101) Cf. the δυσάς...πρόπη in A.P. 11.34.3 (Philodemus)

102) But dissenting voices have been raised, noticeably Housman (cit. by Goold HSCPh (1966) 71: 70). I do not think that Housman's arguments concerning the redundancy of Graeca after Methymnaei warrants its excision, but he may have a case for grata to judge from the parallels he cites for its meaning iucunda.

103) On the use of dwarves by wealthy Romans see Kl. P. v.1566-1567 (S. Oppermann) and cf. Plin. Epist. 9.17.1 for dwarves (moriones) put to different uses.

### CHAPTER III: TIBULLUS

"How do you do? What have you been about?" asked His Grace: then, fixing his eyes on my pale, thin, careworn face, he absolutely started, as though he had seen the ghost of some man he had killed, honestly of course!

"What the devil is the matter?" inquired Wellington.

"Something has affected me deeply," answered I, my eyes again filling with tears, "and I have been ill for more than two months."

"Poor girl!" said Wellington, as though he really would have pitied me, had he but known how, and then added, "I always dreaded your getting into some scrape. Do you recollect I told you so? How much money do you want?" said this man of sentiment, drawing near the table, and taking up my pen to write a draft.

"I have no money," I replied, "not a single shilling; but this is not the cause of my sufferings."

"Nonsense, nonsense," rejoined Wellington, writing me a check.

Harriette Wilson's Memoirs (1929) p. 156

On turning in our study of luxury from Propertius to Tibullus, we encounter elegiac poetry of a rather different nature. A number of features peculiar to Tibullus must be confronted. The rhetorical focus of many of Tibullus' elegies is blurred, that is to say, there is very rarely a clear addressee who is the principal target for persuasion. Often, a number of persons are apostrophised within a single elegy, or no one in particular is addressed. This does not imply that the elegies are not rhetorical in style, quite the contrary, but it does mean that many whole elegies, or parts of them, read something like "stream-of-consciousness", or at least soliloquies, and their rhetorical function is ambiguous. The rustic ideal is stronger and more consistently sustained in some form in Tibullus than in any of the other elegists, and this too holds implications for a



study of luxury. Then too there are extended homosexual poems in which luxury features, something which is not an issue in Propertian or Ovidian elegy. Finally there is the clear shift in direction and tone which we find in Book 2, a shift which, as we shall see, concerns luxury to a considerable degree. This last phenomenon has induced me to treat the two books separately and sequentially in order to register the nature and extent of that shift.

The first elegy serves to acquaint the reader with some of the principal themes of Book 1, while informing him of the persona's stand on certain key issues. His idealised rustic *βίος* is revealed. The poem begins as if it were a moral diatribe in elegiacs on the benefits of country moderation over wealth and warfare. The ideas are general and derivative despite subjectivity<sup>1</sup> professed by the verbs in the first person singular.

The erotic interest of the poem is delayed and introduced gradually. The inclusion of the image of one's mistress in one's arms on a stormy night (1.1.45-46) is made to seem fortuitous; apparently the thought proceeds from the idea of sleeping in one's own bed (1.1.43-44), and is simply an extension of it. From this point on, however, the text reveals its erotic focus (1.1.51-52; note though that ulla puella 52 does not communicate<sup>2</sup> Tibullus' personal interest yet). It is only from line 55 onwards that Tibullus' point becomes clearer, with his explanation to Messalla and the apostrophe of Delia (1.1.57).

Thus the generalised and commonplace juxtaposition of the occupation and circumstances of soldier and farmer is insidiously adapted to a subjective amatory context. Non-specific wealth - gold and land (1.1.1-2, 40 ff.) - do not constitute a very relevant topic for the elegists, which is why items that connote luxury more strongly (smaragdi 1.1.51), and ones which have specific relevance for women, are introduced at the very moment when the erotic aspect of the poem is being clarified.

However, the scope of the poem is restricted to the persona's choice of life-style. The relationship between valuables acquired from exotic locations and the girl is not acknowledged explicitly:

o quantum est auri pereat potiusque smaragdi,  
quam flectat ob nostras ulla puella vias. (1.1.51-52)

The girl will cry if Tibullus campaigns abroad to obtain gold and emeralds; it follows then that she is not interested in these commodities, or is more interested in Tibullus. The desire for gain is consequently restricted to men who engage in warfare. Female cupidity is absent throughout the elegy. When Delia is apostrophised, laus alone is alluded to as the alternative Tibullus is rejecting in favour of continuing to reside in Delia's company. Greed and ambition are restricted to males.

In lines 53-54 the description of Messalla's spoils is deliberately "de-luxurised", rather suspiciously after the

mention of gold and emeralds one line above. The focus in Messalla's case is not on the nature of the spoils, which are studiously neutral, but on the status derived from taking away that which once belonged to a foreign enemy, hostiles...exuvias (1.1.54). Glory and spectacle combine here to raise Messalla in triumph. Note the preposition in praeferat (1.1.54) which connotes advertising in concrete form a campaign successfully completed. Personal gain is not permitted to intrude on the image.<sup>3</sup> This renders Messalla's action correct and becoming to his person (te...decet 1.1.53):<sup>4</sup> a tone rather different from Tibullus' own less polite rejections of this type of life-style, alius...congerat (1.1.1), sit dives iure (1.1.49), dites despiciam (1.1.78), or descriptions of the characters of the men who adopt it, cupidis...viris (1.1.76).

The exposition of the rustic ideal with its attendant paupertas in 1.1 might be expected to give the poet an opportunity to indulge in copious invective against the prevalence of luxury in sexual relationships. Such invective, however, is not really forthcoming in Book 1, at least in the heterosexual poems. There is some castigation of wealth and luxury implicit in the elegist's reiteration of his preference for rustic paupertas throughout the book, but little that is specific.

Complaints of a general nature are found in the commonplaces derived from the ideals of historic primitivism. Tibullus' refusal to participate in Messalla's expedition (1.3) leads him to exclaim longingly in favour of the reign of Saturn. Appropriately for the topic, seafaring in general is castigated

(1.3.37-38), which in turn is given more focus as commerce is linked to the practice, externa...merce (1.3.40). However, this observation is not developed throughout the poem, for in the lines immediately following these he goes on to mention lack of domestication, doors, boundary stones, abundant food, and peace (1.3.41-48). In other words, a utopia is visualised, where foreign commerce is simply one item in a rhetorically comprehensive list of present-day evils that did not exist under the old order. Not all of them seem to be even relevant to the elegist's plight.<sup>5</sup> The indiscriminate and capricious nature of this outburst renders it liable to an ironical reading.

Tibullus' principal point would seem to be that when Saturn reigned, navigation of any sort did not exist, and consequently there was no danger of a lover being separated from his beloved. This sort of topic is echoed in the last elegy of the book, especially in 1.10.7-8, where war and wealth are connected, but love is not permitted to make a conspicuous entrance in this context.

Most importantly, luxury is not acknowledged in Book 1 as a threat to the elegist's relationship with his mistress. Sometimes it actually facilitates his love-affair since it affords him the opportunity of filling the absent husband's place or claiming in argument that the husband's greed overrides his love. In 1.1 we have noted how cupidity for wealth and luxury is confined to the male soldier. It is he who wants to acquire these commodities for his own benefit while his wife is visualised as pining

exclusively for his return, and must be assumed not to desire them.

Such is the position in 1.2. The fault is entirely the husband's.<sup>6</sup> He could have had Delia, but he placed war and booty above her (1.2.65-66). It was his own choice (maluerit 66), obviously the result of a deficient character (ferreus, stultus 65,66), and there is no evidence of his having been prompted by Delia herself. The husband's motive is clarified in the next lines: his egotistical character thirsts after self-glorification, the imagery is reminiscent of triumph.<sup>7</sup> The foreign prisoners (1.2.67), the excessively ornate clothing ("totus et argento contextus, totus et auro" 69), the insistence on his power (victas, capto 67, 68), all combine to inform us of the man's self-conscious aggrandisement of his own person (conspiciendus 1.2.70).

Following some comparisons which Tibullus offers concerning his own preferred life-style (1.2.71-74), the poet resumes the topic and in typically elegiac fashion, carries it into the bedroom. The commonplace juxtaposition of love and wealth is cleverly transferred to a context which successfully encapsulates the dilemma, by locating the wealth in the furniture of the bedroom. A chamber equipped with exotic furnishings (Tyrio...toro 1.2.75, plumae...stragula picta 1.2.77) is of no use without a satisfactory love ("quid...sine amore secundo / prodest..." 1.2.75-76). Despite, or because of, the loneliness, even sleep is impossible (1.2.77-78). The lines quoted above therefore illustrate the elegist's reasons for rejecting wealth and

military hardship. Wealth is perceived as acquired only through negotium overseas (primarily military), which necessitates separation from the beloved. Love is preferred to wealth and therefore the latter is rejected. The inclusion of softly running water in this passage (1.2.78) is interesting in that it reveals something of the elegist's attitude to the luxuries in themselves. Running water is almost universally recognised as having a soporific effect, especially in avowedly pastoral contexts,<sup>8</sup> and so it suggests that the other items in the list of bedroom accoutrements may, under normal conditions, be expected to facilitate slumber. In other words, there is no clearly articulated objection to the luxuries in themselves.

The apostrophising of the mistress throughout this passage (te 1.2.65, 73, tecum 71, mea...Delia 71) also suggests a rhetorical purpose for what is said. Tibullus, in addition to pronouncing his attitude towards military expeditions and booty, is able to persuade Delia that her husband holds booty in higher esteem than he does her, and that only Tibullus will adore her with the devotion she deserves because he does not have the same value-system as her husband. However, this is only a small section of the poem and ancillary to the whole. It does not form the basis of the poem (cf., for example, Propertius 3.12, 3.20, and 4.3, where it does).

There are several other trivial examples of luxury in the "non-homosexual" poems. In 1.6.39-40 Tibullus, while trying to convince Delia's husband that he should allow him to be her

bodyguard, mentions would-be suitors who display effeminate traits:

tum procul absitis, quisquis colit arte capillos,  
et fluit effuso cui toga laxa sinu.

The hair-styles and cut of the toga suggest nepotes, the young urbane set who deliberately affect a foppish style, and probably have access to considerable financial resources. Tibullus comically brings this type of rival into the erotic context in order to persuade the soldiering husband that the poet's aid is required. Presumably they are the complete antithesis to the husband in character, and their mention is designed to instil fear and loathing in him. They are not the sort of rivals Tibullus himself has expressed any concern for in Book 1. His focus has been on the warrior who acquires booty on expeditions overseas.

It is worth noting that in the same poem (1.6.25-26) a luxurious commodity (precious stones) is shown to be an aid to secret love-making:

saepe, velut gemmas eius signumque probarem,  
per causam memini me tetigisse manum.

This is doubly ironic. Firstly that a trinket should help the "rustic" Tibullus, and secondly that it must be a trinket supplied by the life-style of the wealthy husband. The husband's presents are used against him (cf. 1.9.67-74).

Another positive employment of luxury is to be found in the description of Osiris 1.7.46-48:

fusa sed ad teneros lutea palla pedes  
et Tyriae vestes et dulcis tibia cantu  
et levis occultis conscia cista sacris.

We have seen from Propertius how luxury is justified when it is employed in religious or ritualistic contexts (cf. also the Assyrios...odores 1.3.7 which Tibullus would like offered over his grave). Saffron and purple-coloured garments are appropriate not only because of their quality and value, but also because Osiris is a foreign god, and this makes exotic dress all the more seemly.

Elegy 1.4 introduces the theme of homosexual love into the book, and with it the topic of luxury as a threat in itself, without the accompanying separation necessitated by the process of acquiring the items.<sup>9</sup> The whole elegy is rendered humorous by the mock-seriousness of the erotodidaxis and the nature of the instructor - a statue of Priapus. Everything ridiculous about this deity is studiously excluded from the elegy, but not of course from the reader's consciousness.

At the outset, Tibullus establishes a link between himself and Priapus. The latter is a country god (rustica proles 1.4.7) and also one who has a high success-rate with boys (1.4.3). Yet, as



Tibullus notes (1.4.4), the god does not display the aspect one would expect attractive to boys: a trendy hair-style and well-oiled beard. Poor the god undoubtedly is, and this combined with rusticity enables Tibullus to identify with this divine illustration of the poet's rustic-erotic ideal. If Priapus can succeed in the realm of love in his circumstances, what is his secret? The bulk of the elegy is occupied by Priapus' advice to Tibullus on this very subject (1.4.9-72).

The irony, of course, lies in the fact that all this advice is redundant with respect to the god's personal success. The answer to the question of Priapus' success, so naively asked by Tibullus, is quite simple, in fact base: his enormous and unflaggingly erect phallus.<sup>10</sup> This interpretation is made possible to the reader by the persona's unwitting emphasis of the god's nakedness:

nudus et hibernae producis frigora brumae,

nudus et aestivi tempora sicca Canis. (1.4.5-6)

Cairns is perhaps right to assert that the divinity's nudity connotes poverty, but it would be obtuse indeed not to recognise that Priapus' anatomical endowment is also raised before the reader's mind's eye.<sup>11</sup>

While Priapus does not allude to anything as indelicate as the above, he does inform Tibullus of another unwholesome truth about homosexual relationships which effectively undermines much of the advice in 1.4.9-56. Exploiting the idea that ages have a specific

ethical character, and that the present age is one of the worst in this regard, the god emphasises the venality of boys:

heu male nunc artes miseras haec saecula tractant:

iam tener adsuevit munera velle puer. (1.4.57-58)

The trend is regrettable but unavoidable.

Typical of the rhetoric of tracts of this sort, the instigator of the practice is cursed (1.4.59-60), as later are boys who choose to accept them (1.4.67 ff). Munera are what the puer delicatus desires, and these are most easily obtainable from a rich lover no matter what his age, character, aspect, or behaviour. That these munera are of a luxurious nature is confirmed in 1.4.62, aurea...munera. The value of love poetry (obviously a concern of the elegiac poet) relative to material gifts is expounded for the benefit of all boys. It is only through the medium of poetry that material objects are rendered valuable (1.4.63-64). The examples employed to illustrate this point are strikingly comical in their strangeness and inappropriateness:

carmine purpurea est Nisi coma: carmina ni sint,  
ex umero Pelopis non nituisset ebur.

That, but for poetry, we would not be aware that Nisus had crimson hair or Pelops an ivory shoulder, is ludicrous as an argument in favour of the value of poetry. The value of the portions of the anatomy of these mythical characters is the focus

of the illustration, while the horrific circumstances surrounding them are humorously ignored. Ivory shoulders and crimson hair are monstrously macabre examples of the use of expensive materials, and unlikely to be deemed relevant in a contemporary erotic context.

Priapus, and of course Tibullus, have no remedy to combat venality in homosexual affairs. As the poet himself admits at the end of the elegy, he is helpless (1.4.81-84).

Lines 7-14 of 1.8 are problematic because it is ambiguous as to whom Tibullus is addressing: Marathus, Pholoe, himself, or no one specific? However, presumably illa (1.8.15) is intended to contrast with tibi (1.8.9), the latter deriving no benefit from personal toilet, the former (Pholoe) requiring no effort to make herself desirable to Marathus. It thus makes more sense to understand Tibullus' tirade against grooming as directed towards Marathus. Generally the love-elegists object to the cosmetics of luxury, preferring their loved ones unadorned and natural (cf. Prop. 1.2). Marathus' use of cosmetics is ineffectual as regards Pholoe, and unimportant to Tibullus himself, who finds the boy desirable anyway (as we have learned from 1.4). The novelty in this elegy stems from the fact that the beloved who is employing cosmetics here is male. Though men did use cosmetics in antiquity, even the urbane felt that there was a tasteful limit to such practices. Ovid in the first book of the Ars Amatoria gives some useful information on this issue. On the whole, Ovid advises a type of golden mean, although the "rough" look was also thought to drive women to distraction ("forma viros neglecta

deceit" AA 1.509). In any event, Marathus' attention to hair (1.8.9-10), complexion (11), manicure (11-12), clothing (13), and shoes (14), goes beyond the limits of what is considered decent for a male.<sup>12</sup> Ironically, behaviour which might connote effeminacy is in fact designed to achieve success in a heterosexual relationship.

The lesson Marathus has learned with regard to luxurious dressing of one's own person serves as a paradigm for other kinds of luxury in an amatory context. Tibullus has proceeded to address Pholoe on Marathus' behalf. He instructs her not to demand gifts, but to accept them as a condition for any sexual favours yielded to the old rival (1.8.29-30). The physical attributes of the young lover are given more value than presents:

carior est auro iuvenis, cui levia fulgent  
ora nec amplexus aspera barba terit.  
huic tu candentes umero suppose lacertos,  
et regum magnae despiciantur opes. (1.8.31-34)

The section is concluded with a statement which echoes that made in 1.2.75-76:

non lapis hanc gemmaeque iuvant, quae frigore sola  
dormiat et nulli sit cupienda viro. (1.8.39-40)

Beauty will not endure forever (1.8.41-46), and once one is old, precious stones cannot compensate for the lack of erotic

companionship.

We should examine the rhetorical dynamics of these passages more closely in order to appreciate the overall ironic effect. We have already been informed in 1.4 that Tibullus is in love with Marathus. This will be confirmed in the very next poem (1.9). What then is Tibullus' attitude to Marathus' passion for Pholoe? It could be argued, especially after reading 1.9, that Tibullus is unconcerned by Marathus' attachment: firstly because Pholoe does not seem to be taking much interest in the boy, secondly because his competitor is a woman not a man, and thus might not pose as obvious a threat to his own sexuality. The boy's role with a woman would be active and this would not interfere, conceptually at least, with the active role Tibullus would wish to play with regard to Marathus. A male lover on the other hand, as old as, or older than, Tibullus, would supersede Tibullus' active role with Marathus. Another point to note is that Pholoe does not have access to the seductive medium of wealth, and so the poor poet Tibullus does not have to worry about disadvantaged competition in that sphere. Besides all this, there is something quite satisfying in a situation where the notoriously spoiled and unfeeling puer delicatus is himself prone to erotic frustration.<sup>13</sup> Note the hint of scorn in Tibullus' question, "quid tibi nunc molles prodest coluisse capillos..." (1.8.9 ff.), which sets an ironic tone for all Tibullus' advice on love.

His instructions to Pholoe with regard to the value of youthful attention over wealth should be read with full consciousness of their naivety. There is no guarantee that simplistic advice of

this nature will have any conspicuous effect on the girl (who may well be a courtesan anyway, or at best a woman of low status and therefore amenable to seduction by commerce) and of course, bearing in mind Tibullus' own feelings for Marathus, there is no good reason for believing that the poet is sincere in his wish that she cease to be venal.

This poem provides the first direct allusion in the book to the threat to a heterosexual relationship posed by the seductive powers of wealth and luxury. It has been introduced as a problem in homosexual relationships (1.4.58, 67) but even here the origin has tended to be conceptualised as external to the beloved (1.4.57, 59-60). We shall have to wait until the second book before we discover that it poses a threat to Tibullus' own heterosexual relationship with Nemesis.

The playfulness of 1.8 is counteracted dramatically and ironically by 1.9, where the omniscient and distanced doctor amandi finds himself in practically the same position with regard to Marathus as the latter had with regard to Pholoe. At an early stage in the elegy, Tibullus isolates lucra as the goal of all human activity, even, strangely for him, that of the farmer:

lucra petens habili tauros adiungit aratro  
et durum terrae rusticus urget opus,  
lucra petituras freta per parentia ventis  
ducunt instabiles sidera certa rates. (1.9.7-10)

Within this framework, the poet regretfully places love:

muneribus meus est captus puer, at deus illa  
in cinerem et liquidas munera vertat aquas. (1.9.11-12)

The poet regards love as something which should not be governed by the same commercial interests as other activities. In order to render this concept more convincing, the elegist elevates the status of love to the sacred, which consequently causes any attempt to win it by filthy lucre a sacrilegious act, a miasma; gold is a pollution on the body of the beloved, gold is inherently evil:

admonui quotiens "auro ne pollue formam:  
saepe solent auro multa subesse mala.  
divitiis captus si quis violavit amorem,  
asperaque est illi difficilisque Venus." (1.9.17-20)

and:

tunc mihi iurabas nullo te divitis auri  
pondere, non gemmis, vendere velle fidem.<sup>15</sup> (1.9.31-32)

Just as Zeus acts as guarantor of oaths in general, so Venus punishes the breaking of lovers' oaths, oaths that are usually recognised as of no real consequence (so Priapus at 1.4.21-26).<sup>16</sup>

Wealth and luxury therefore, on this flawed reasoning, produce impious behaviour.

With horrified exasperation, the venal boy is rejected (1.9.51-<sup>17</sup>52), an action which is a little redundant in view of the fact that Marathus has already been seduced by another man's wealth:

tu procul hinc absis, cui formam vendere cura est  
et pretium plena grande referre manu.

The boy's greed is successfully communicated by the adjectives grande and plena, and the concrete image of Marathus clutching a reward in his hand.

The curse of the wealthy rival in 1.9.53-64 with its subjunctives turns into a series of observations in the indicative mood that are given a strong sense of innuendo through interrogation and answer (1.9.65-74). Unable to find a chink in the seductive power of wealth with respect to his boyfriend, Tibullus takes pleasure in observing that the items of luxury which the old man is employing to win the boy are in turn being utilised deceptively by the man's wife. Dressed hair, golden trinkets, and Tyrian cloth (1.9.67-70) complement the wife's outward form (vult bella videri 1.9.71). However, her motive (non tibi sed iuveni cuidam 1.9.71) goes to illustrate the general validity of the reasons why Tibullus dreads gold (it pollutes the character of the beloved), except that he takes joy in the fact. The point of all this, apart from the poetic irony of a seducer being wounded with the aid of his own weapons, would seem to be that luxury is indifferent to its owner. It can be exploited in any way by anybody, but its method tends to be



deception, and its effect the rupturing of erotic fides. In this particular instance, viciousness is comically denied as a motive for the wife's actions: it is simply the disgusting physical nature of the husband that drives her to seek young lovers (1.9.73-74), a final kick at the rival's person from a jilted lover with a wounded ego.

Book 2 of the Tibullan collection bears witness to the disintegration of the rustic ideal. Rusticity persists, however, in a number of contexts: 2.1 is crammed with country images and wholesome traditionality, though the wine is suspiciously choice - Falernian and Chian (27-28), 2.5 gives an historically primitivistic view of Rome, but it has nationalistic overtones.

At first glance, elegy 2.3 would seem to offer the same ideals as those encountered in Book 1, except that the appreciation and conception of the countryside appear more urbane. There are signs that the speaker is unaccustomed to the labour required of a peasant, graciles...artus, teneras...manus (2.3.9-10). Some sort of justification by exemplum seems to lie behind the illustration of formosus Apollo, whose poetry and elegant demeanour did not help him herd cattle (2.3.11-14a; unfortunately a lacuna in the text prevents clarity on how this was developed). Most importantly, unlike his stance in 1.1, Tibullus does not seem to be praising the country and its life for its own sake, but because his girl happens to be there (2.3.1-2).<sup>18</sup> There is no real rustic ideal here, no personal philosophy of life.<sup>19</sup> In fact, the agricultural labour depicted in 2.3.5-10 is implied to be arduous and onerous, more a proving-ground for the enduring

nature of his passion for Nemesis than a preferred life-style. The climax comes at the very end of the elegy when the entire rustic ideal is rejected if it forces Tibullus to be apart from Nemesis (2.3.61-67). His refuge in the rustic landscape of the past is a feeble and discredited attempt to recover this old ideal (2.3.68-74).

Although the previous elegy had reiterated the sentiment expressed in Book 1 that a man should not wish for luxurious articles over the faithful and honest love of a wife (2.2.15-16), there is in 2.3 a complete change in attitude to exotic valuables. The poet's change in outlook concerning this issue is analogous to the one concerning the rustic ideal mentioned above. However, it is not that Tibullus now prefers luxury over love, it is rather that he has acknowledged and surrendered to the cupidity of his mistress, and has, in terms of the elegiac value-system of Book 1, become completely immoral in the pursuance of his erotic goals.<sup>20</sup>

"Immoral" is the correct adjective here, because in addition to the information implicitly provided by Book 1, Tibullus is careful to express his awareness of the wickedness inherent in the venality and luxury of the present age. This is done in terms that communicate the universal prevalence of decadence, even touching areas beyond the immediate erotic interest of the elegist. The relationship between blood, greed, and luxury is emphasised in tones more serious and direct than anything yet in Tibullus:

ferrea non venerem sed praedam saecula laudant:  
 praeda tamen multis est operata malis.  
 praeda feras acies cinxit discordibus armis:  
 hinc cruor, hinc caedes mors propiorque venit.  
 praeda vago iussit geminare pericula ponto,  
 bellica cum dubiis rostra dedit ratibus.  
 praedator cupit immensos obsidere campos,  
 ut multa innumera iugera pascant oves:  
 cui lapis externus curae est, urbisque tumultu  
 portatur validis mille columna iugis,  
 claudit et indomitum moles mare, lentus ut intra  
 neglegat hibernas piscis adesse minas. (2.3.35-46)

The rhetorical climax to the excursus is provided by the praedator's hybristic attempts to subdue nature herself, an act that reinforces the monstrosity of the age. Trivial considerations such as the separation of lover and beloved that the desire for booty necessitates do not feature here.

Tibullus makes a pathetic attempt to counteract the overwhelming pressure of the age:

21  
 at mihi laeta trahant Samiae convivia testae  
 fictaque Cumana lubrica terra rota. (2.3.47-48)

He will employ cheap yet tasteful earthenware of respectable manufacture in preference to vessels of more precious materials.<sup>22</sup> Tibullus has extolled the material and symbolic

virtues of terracotta before (puris...fictilibus 1.1.38, and 39-40), but the integrity of his professed austerity collapses under the weight of his desire to satisfy his passion:

heu heu divitibus video gaudere puellas:

iam veniant praedae, si Venus optat opes. (2.3.49-50)

Despite the regret signalled by the exclamatory heu heu, Tibullus acquiesces with an agility which is difficult to reconcile with the value-system expounded in the first book.

There follows an enumeration of the sort of luxuries Tibullus is willing to adorn Nemesis with:

ut mea luxuria Nemesis fluat utque per urbem  
incedat donis conspicienda meis.

illa gerat vestes tenues, quas femina Coa  
texuit, auratas disposuitque vias:

illi sint comites fusci, quos India torret  
Solis et admotis inficit ignis equis:

illi selectos certent praebere colores

Africa puniceum purpureumque Tyros. (2.3.51-58)

Nemesis' aspect here is a studied imitation of a triumphal procession with all the animate and inanimate symbols of a successful campaign: Coan garments with a golden weave (cf. 1.2.69 "totus et argento contextus, totus et auro"), the dyes of foreign places, the captured peoples of exotic kingdoms (cf.

1.2.67 "ille licet Cilicum victas agat ante catervas"). Combined with these elements is the selection of appropriate verbs and phrases which conjure up images of public procession: per urbem (2.3.51), incedat (52), gerat (53). "Incedat donis conspicienda meis" (2.3.52) recalls the husband who proceeds in triumph for all to see, adorned in finery: "insideat celeri conspiciendus equo" (1.2.70); the coincidence can hardly be fortuitous: it serves to emphasise the complete volte-face in Tibullus' attitude.<sup>23</sup>

The list in 2.3.51-58 is quite shameless in its detail, perverse in the pleasure it takes in expanding on the foreign provenance of the luxuries. There is no semantic necessity for including a reference to the person who manufactures Coan material (2.3.53-54), or for explaining the reason for the complexion of the Indian attendants (2.3.55-56), or for the hendiadys of 2.3.57-58, but these embellishments are essential in giving full impact to the luxurious nature of the items. In instilling a tone of excess, Tibullus causes the text to ooze with exoticism. Though such passages occur in Propertius, this is the first time that Tibullus has ventured to be so emphatic in specifying the nature of luxury. His surrender is total, almost self-indulgent.

Elegy 2.4 continues to develop the theme of heterosexual love threatened by luxury. Tibullus in this poem is in much the same position as he found himself in with his boyfriend at 1.9. The position of the elegist would seem to be more desperate than that in 2.3. His torture involves physical pain (2.4.6). His realisation that poetry has no power to seduce leads him to

reject it altogether (2.4.15-20). With this comes the sure knowledge that only gifts can keep his mistress, yet her greed for them seems inexhaustible ("illa cava pretium flagitat usque manu" 2.4.14, cf. 1.9.52, dominamque rapacem 2.4.25). In order to provide Nemesis with luxuries, Tibullus informs us unambiguously that he must resort to the very outrages he described at 2.3.35-46, crime, murder, and impiety:

at mihi per caedem et facinus sunt dona paranda,  
ne iaceam clausam flebilis ante domum:  
aut rapiam suspensa sacris insignia fanis:  
sed Venus ante alios est violanda mihi. (2.4.21-24)

In 2.3 Tibullus had not said exactly how the luxuries were acquired, but here in 2.4 the degradation of the elegiac persona would seem to be complete: an emotional state that accurately reflects the totality of his servitium. A pathetically ineffectual curse on the inventor of luxury is the last whimper from the poet on behalf of his elegiac ideal. The climax to all this: he would even sell the household Lares (2.4.53-54) or drink poison (2.4.55-60) if it would help his cause with Nemesis.

However, even here there are elements of irony and humour. These stem primarily from the erotic perspective enforced on what might normally be a moral issue of more serious proportions. Tibullus claims, somewhat melodramatically, that he must commit murder and other crimes to provide gifts: the motive? - so as not to lie weeping outside his mistress' door (2.4.21-22). Another example

of comic bathos is found in lines 31-38. After recounting various luxuries, "haec fecere malas" (2.4.31) turns out to mean no more than that girls keep their doors locked against lovers who do not bring gifts. It is difficult not to find humour in the image of the dog who can distinguish between lovers with presents and those without (2.4.34). Obviously the janitor keeps the dog silent when he recognises an acceptable caller, but the animal is comically imagined as acting on its own volition.

Thus while 2.4 describes a more advanced state than 2.3 with regard to the problem of luxury and one's mistress, it is rendered in a rather interesting variety of tones. Even self-irony is apparent in Tibullus' own comment on his hackneyed prediction of burial without honour:

vera quidem moneo, sed prosunt quid mihi vera? (2.4.51)

Much of the interest in Book 2 stems from its ironic undermining of the elegist's previous attitude to luxury.

### NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1) On the superiority of rustic simplicity over wealth, see Smith, K. F. (1978) p. 184.

2) Cf. Leach, E. W. (1980) Arethusa 13: 85 "The general sentiment of vss. 1-4 has been reshaped into an amatory topos".

3) Cf. Messalla's "correct" use of the luxurious at 1.7.8 currus eburnus.

4) Cf. Murgatroyd, P. (1980) p. 61 "Messalla wins spoil...for the glory of his family and himself. His motives are correct (decet)..." But decet can be morally neutral eg. 1.2.13,28, and simply express appropriateness within a given set of circumstances, or it can be used of behaviour proper to vicious persons, eg. Cat. 10.24 f., "hic illa, ut decuit cinaediorum, / 'quaeso' inquit 'mihi...'"

5) Observed by Whitaker, R. (1983) p. 68, "The sequence of negatives in 37-40 is continued by the negatives in 41-44, and the formal continuity thus achieved disguises the transition from that part of the myth which contrasts directly with the poet's experience, to that part which simply adds definition."

6) As to the identity of the person signified by the pronoun ille (1.2.65) there is some dispute. Murgatroyd, P. (1980) p. 91 believes it is Delia's coniunx since, as he points out, no other rival has really been the focus in this poem; so too Ball, R. J. (1983) p. 42.

7) Cf. the more respectable rendering of a practically identical



situation in 1.1. For the locus classicus of hybristic "triumph" see Aeschylus' version of Agamemnon's homecoming.

8) Eg. Hor. Od. 1.1.22, Culex 78, etc.

9) On the mercenary traits of pueri delicati see Murgatroyd, P. (1977) Act. Class. 20: 107.

10) Large phalli seem to have been found sexually appealing, cf. Petron. Sat. 92.8-11 (homosexual), Juv. Sat. 1.41 (heterosexual). On the irony and latent sexuality of the Tibullan passage see Pieri, M-P. (1986) p. 75.

11) Cairns, F. (1979) pp. 37-38. On nudus as an allusion to the god's ithyphallic state, see Pieri, M-P. (1986) p. 75.

12) Adonis and Hippolytus, two mythical characters who might seem fairly close in type to the literary idealisation of the παῖς καλός that Marathus represents, are interestingly seen to conform to the "natural look" category, Ov. AA 1.511-512.

13) Eg.

Ἔρως ποτ' ἐν ῥόδοισι  
κοιμωμένην μέλιτταν  
οὐκ εἶδεν, ἀλλ' ἐτρώθη  
τὸν δάκτυλον παταχθεὶς.  
δραμῶν δὲ καὶ πετασθεὶς  
τὰς χεῖρας ὠλόλυξε  
πρὸς τὴν καλὴν Κυθήρην.  
ὄλωλα, μήτερ, εἶπεν,  
ὄλωλα κάποθνήσκω  
ὄφεις μ' ἔτυψε μικρὸς  
πτερωτός, ὃν καλοῦσιν

μέλιτταν οἱ γεωργοί .  
 ἢ δ' εἶπεν· εἰ τὸ κέντρον  
 πονεῖ τὸ τῆς μελίττης,  
 πόσον δοκέεις πονοῦσιν,  
 Ἔρως, ὅσους σὺ βάλλεις;

[Anacr.] 35 (Rose)

14) On the lines cf. Leach, E. W. (1980) Arethusa 13: 92 "Once more the weakness of human nature has destroyed ideal order to leave the elegist as baffled and indignant as if he had never encountered this problem before..."

15) Cf. foedera 1.9.2, periuria 3, fallaci...amore 83.

16) See Smith, K. F. (1978) pp. 270-71 and Murgatroyd, P. (1980) pp. 139-140.

17) Tibullus is unsparing in his use of the prosaic verb vendere, cf. 1.9.32, 51, 77, 1.4.59, 67.

18) That it is the presence of the erotic interest that makes the countryside agreeable is noted by Gotoff, H. C. (1974) HSCP 78: 232, 239.

19) So also Whitaker, R. (1979) CQ 29: 137; Sauvage, A. (1969) Latomus 28: 884 also sees Tibullus' work on the land as "une redoutable épreuve", but seeks to lessen the contrast between the poet as urbane esthete and agricultural labourer.

20) Cairns (1979) p. 154 sees a rich rival as the cause of this change, a view which necessitates a rhetorical function for the passage on praeda rather than interpreting it as a soliloquy. Smith, K. F. (1978) p. 420 interprets the real fault as the greed of Nemesis; however, Cairns is surely correct to remark (p. 155),

"...if wealth helps him he [sc. Tibullus] will espouse it. Love therefore has the power to override, at any rate for a time, other aspects of his persona."

21) 2.3.47 mihi Parisina Excerpta, Postgate; tibi Ambrosianus.

K. F. Smith (1978) accepts tibi without remark and assumes (p. 424) that Tibullus is directly inviting Nemesis to choose a simple life.

22) Cf. Smith, K. F. (1978) p. 424 on implications of Samian and Campanian ware.

23) I am surprised to see K. Galinsky claim (WS (1969) 3: 79) "...Tibullus never goes so far as to adapt this theme" (i.e. the triumph theme) "for the purposes of love poetry." On the spectacle of triumph see Nicolet, C. (1980) pp. 352-354.

#### CHAPTER IV: OVID

"Money can't buy me love!"    The Beatles

Unlike Propertius who introduces the theme of luxury in his second elegy, or Tibullus who treats the topics of wealth and rustic paupertas in his first, Ovid does not include it in his initial poems. Even where the opportunity arises, eg. in a paraclausithyron elegy (Am. 1.6), he does not complain about the ease with which rich lovers are admitted to the mistress as long as they bring expensive presents. <sup>1</sup> Again, in Am. 1.2, when he is suffering from insomnia induced by the onset of love, he does not elaborate on the quality of his bedroom furniture in the manner of Tibullus 1.2.75-76:

quid Tyrio recubare toro sine amore secundo  
prodest cum fletu nox vigilanda venit?

In fact, nowhere in the Amores does Ovid engage in detailed description or castigation of luxurious articles. Just as Ovid is able to speak about a love-affair without naming a specific female until Am. 1.5, so he can discourse on gifts and commerce within a love-affair without enumerating the items in detail. Ovid works in abstract concepts and seems content to leave them abstract. This is because the Amores are essentially an exercise in literary criticism: a study, through the process of rewriting, of love elegy as a genre. Ovid presents for scrutiny the conventions, structures, and topics of that genre in an ironic and self-conscious framework. The position of luxury or money in

the elegiac love-affair is merely one of a number of themes and topics that Ovid explores in his poems. Frequently, an individual elegy reads like a mini-essay on a particular set of themes, or focuses on a single theme with the others being subsidiary. The topic that approximates to "luxury in love-affairs" is restricted for the most part to only four poems: Am. 1.8, 1.10, 1.14, and 3.8. Other poems concentrate on different features of elegy.

The close similarity of Amores 1.8 and Propertius 4.5 is patent, but scholars have had difficulty deciding which poem precedes which.<sup>2</sup> However, in an academic analysis where the poems are being read closely and contemporaneously, the relative chronology of the texts is of little importance. The similarities and differences of the two poems are the focus of the study.

At the first introduction of the word lena (Am. 1.8.1) the reader can be expected to register the woman's significance in an amatory context. These associations would be acquired through the reader's knowledge of the lena's depiction in Hellenistic and contemporary mime, New and Roman comedy, Hellenistic epigram, and, most relevant to this elegy, Propertius 4.5.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the social existence of this type of person would reinforce the reader's literary acquaintance.<sup>4</sup> She represents a force that interferes with the process of seduction instigated by the lover with whom the reader is intended to sympathise. In literature lenae never work for the benefit of the hero, always for his rivals. They perceive sexual relationships in pragmatic, mercenary terms. Hence they are destructive of the elegiac

conception of love. The advice they give to an amica constitutes a complete contradiction of all the utterances of the poor poet in love. Propertius in 4.5 had highlighted the gravity of the threat posed by the lena's attitude, and in so doing he had effectively prescribed how the elegiac lover and all subsequent elegists were to regard her.

Ovid's lena is a more accomplished orator than her Propertian counterpart.<sup>5</sup> Ovid almost respects her oratorical powers (1.8.20), while Propertius had not described Acanthis' persuasiveness as exclusively verbal (Prop. 4.5.5-8). Her speech is also much longer: 86 lines as against the 42 lines of Propertius 4.5. Unlike Propertius' lena, alluding to wealth in a suitor is not her sole method of persuasion. Acanthis had launched straight into enumerating a list of luxurious items which she thought would entice her young disciple (Prop. 4.5.21-26), but Dipsas begins more delicately. The amica is informed that she has caught the attention of a iuveni...beato (1.8.23), which is a less restrictive description than iuvenis dives. It communicates more than simply material success: social rank, and general character,<sup>6</sup> are also designated by the adjective beatus. This restraint is sustained as far as 1.8.27:

7

tam felix esses quam formosissima vellem.

It is only in the next line that Dipsas is more direct about the nature of the benefit the amica will derive from an association with the young suitor, and her admission of the profit she herself will make on the deal is humorously and disarmingly

honest:

non ego te facta divite pauper ero. (1.8.28)

The delicacy of 1.8.23 is now restated more prosaically: "...dives amator/te cupiit" (1.8.31-32). However, Dipsas does not seem to think it necessary to expand upon the nature of the young man's wealth. She does not elect to entice the girl by enumerating the types of luxuries that await her if she takes on a rich suitor.

While the lena is engaged in advertising a specific client, she is careful to establish that the young man is blessed with attributes in addition to wealth, particularly his good looks:

est etiam facies, qua se tibi comparet, illi:

si te non emptam vellet, emendus erat. (1.8.33-34)

The latter line is amusing because apart from its prosaicness with regard to the commerce of sexual relationships it also claims that the man himself is desirable enough to be bought, as if, ironically, the girl must let him purchase her now while stocks of him last. For rhetorical purposes the normal flow of amatory commerce is presented as comically reversed. A witty paradox such as this is typically Ovidian and quite unlike anything in Propertius and Tibullus. The lena's bluntness elicits an embarrassed response from her pupil (erubuit 1.8.35) as if girls know, or are receptive to, the commercial truth of love but

hault at too candid an expression of it.

However, the girl's reaction to the lena's advice enables her to advance a fresh sequence of precepts. For the rest of her speech the individual client is forgotten and Dipsas expands the field of her instructions to cover sexual relationships with men generally. It is here that the importance of simulatio becomes clear.<sup>8</sup> Ovid does not permit a direct and spontaneous link between money and dishonesty in love. Instead, dissimulation becomes a tool in the hands of an experienced woman for captivating lovers, whose essential use is the wealth that can be obtained from them.

Paragons of chastity are redrawn as outmoded or suspect ("immundae Tatio regnante Sabinae" etc. 1.8.39 f., "Penelope iuvenum vires temptabat in arcu" 1.8.47). Modesty is renamed rusticitas (cf. 1.8.44). Relevant to Ovid's own predicament is the section the lena devotes to poets as suitors (1.8.57-62). Her sarcastic and artful exploitation of Apollo's appurtenances allows her to discredit poetry as a love-offering. The god has a golden cloak and lyre, why should elegists be exempt from "coughing up"? Ingenium is another concept that is pragmatically redefined in flagrant contradiction of the elegiac ideal:

qui dabit, ille tibi magno sit maior Homero;  
crede mihi, res est ingeniosa dare.<sup>9</sup> (1.8.61-62)

Social status and looks should all be subservient to money (1.8.63-68). When all the trimmings are shed, only money matters.



Whole households can live off the hapless infatuated lover (1.8.91), and note how they are all women - a female conspiracy! The ideals of elegiac love could not suffer a more thorough denial than this.

Yet, compared with Propertius 4.5.67-78, Ovid's curse is shorter and surprisingly mild:

di tibi dent nullosque lares inopemque senectam

et longas hiemes perpetuamque sitim (1.8.113-114)

a fate which in all probability is simply a continuation of her present circumstances.<sup>10</sup> Such an end suggests that Ovid's principal interest has been in the character of the lena and the opportunity it yields for depicting her craft and chicanery. The persona who is privileged to overhear this intimate, feminine conversation is not permitted to experience the pain and anger one would normally expect from a proper elegiac lover.

If Am. 1.8 encapsulates feminine advice on what sort of attitude a girl should adopt towards sexual relationships, then Am. 1.10 provides a masculine attempt at a persuasive "antidote". The sentiments of the elegy are familiar from Propertius and Tibullus,<sup>11</sup> but the treatment is somehow different in its declamatory character and decidedly unelegiac compromise at the close. As in Am. 1.8, a reading of Am. 1.10 is more profitable if it is done in conjunction with an examination of a poem by Propertius, in this case Prop. 1.3. Indeed, much of the irony of

Am. 1.10 relies on this text.

The similarity between the opening lines of Am. 1.10 and Prop. 1.3 is clear:

Qualis ab Eurota Phrygiis avecta carinis  
 coniugibus belli causa duobus erat,  
 qualis erat Lede, quam plumis abditus albis  
 callidus in falsa lusit adulter ave,  
 qualis Amymone siccis erravit in Argis,  
 cum premeret summi verticis urna comas,  
 talis eras:...

Am. 1.10.1-7

Qualis Thesea iacuit cedente carina  
 languida desertis Cnosia litoribus;  
 qualis et accubuit primo Cepheia somno  
 libera iam duris cotibus Andromede;  
 nec minus assiduis Edonis fessa choreis  
 qualis in herboso concidit Apidano:  
 talis visa...

Prop. 1.3.1-7

Propertius' elegy had depicted a slumbering, and consequently idealised, Cynthia (1.3.1-30) who, when awakened, comically failed to realise the poet's conception of her (1.3.31-46). This romantic idealisation is accompanied by analogies drawn from Greek myth (1.3.1-6), analogies that do not fit the reality of a night in Augustan Rome.<sup>13</sup> A similar disruption of romanticism can be detected in the way Ovid breaks off his list of mythological comparisons:<sup>14</sup>

nunc timor omnis abest animique resanuit error,

nec facies oculos iam capit ista meos.

cur sim mutatus quaeris? quia munera poscis:

haec te non patitur causa placere mihi. Am. 1.10.9-12

Both poems indicate that the persona's enchantment is broken, but while Propertius allows the romantic mood to develop as he dwells lovingly and dreamily on the scene (thirty lines), Ovid is swift to dispel the atmosphere. Ovid's opening to the elegy seems more contrived to set the reader up for a quick and ironic reversal. The heroines in Propertius' list are all relevant to the image of his loved one's disposition in repose. Apart from the beauty of Ovid's heroines, it is not clear what immediate significance they have for his mistress, until one suspects that adultery or sex with a stronger suitor is their common attribute.<sup>15</sup>

Though the topic of luxury in love is not a trivial issue in elegy, as a motive for Ovid's falling out of love, it cannot fail to be read as paltry because of the manner in which he presents it: quia munera poscis (Am. 1.10.11). The reader is waiting for the reason for the love poet's loss of passion, and the reply comes as an anticlimax. Ovid has not given the matter any rhetorical padding which could at least have the effect of making it seem a weightier thing. Nor does he launch into a castigation of vice and the debilitating effect of luxury and avarice. Instead he embarks upon a fallaciously reasoned argument against gifts, based on examples and analogies of dubious validity. The

rhetoric of his argument is so transparent, so exaggerated, that it can only be deliberate and ironic on the persona's part.

The poet begins with statements which give the impression that he is highly moral:

donec eras simplex, animum cum corpore amavi;  
nunc mentis vitio laesa figura tua est. Am. 1.10.13-14

Ovid's appreciation of his mistress is not purely physical. In fact, her character is far more important than her body because if it is corrupted she fails to attract him physically. This pose forms the basis for his argument until line 53. Asking for gifts is cunningly conceptualised as treating sex as a commercial venture. In order to dissuade his mistress from this course the poet alludes to the traditional "poverty" of the gods of love (1.10.15-20),<sup>16</sup> the good example set by animals (1.10.25-28),<sup>17</sup> and, of course, to the inevitable analogy of the prostitute:

stat meretrix certo cuivis mercabilis aere  
et miseras iusso corpore quaerit opes;  
devovet imperium tamen haec lenonis avari  
et, quod vos facitis sponte, coacta facit. 1.10.21-24<sup>18</sup>

The prostitute is compelled to do what she does and she detests it: iusso corpore 22, devovet imperium...lenonis avari 23, coacta 24, miseras...opes 22. However, the prostitute analogy does not quite fit Ovid's mistress. There is no leno avarus in her life who is compelling her to seek her livelihood in this way. Ovid

has recourse to mentioning prostitution once again (faciem lucro prostituisse suam, 42) and its association is unavoidable in many of the other metaphors he exploits of women's commercial use of sexual relationships.<sup>19</sup>

Ovid's arguments vacillate between morality, expediency, and commonsense. In lines 31-36, for example, he attempts to point out how ludicrous it is for one person to buy and another to sell a commodity which is mutually satisfying:

et vendit, quod utrumque iuvat, quod uterque petebat,  
et pretium, quanti gaudeat ipsa, facit.  
quae Venus ex aequo ventura est grata duobus,  
altera cur illam vendit et alter emit?  
cur mihi sit damno, tibi sit lucrosa voluptas? 1.10.31-35

Naturally he assumes that the pleasure is mutual to begin with. Even more illogical is the fact that a woman charges more if she receives more pleasure. In other words, even in commercial terms the exchange is not a fair one. Ovid's indignation is roused when he conceives of sex going the same way as corruption in the law courts (nec bene.../nec bene.../turpe.../...turpe.../turpe... 1.10.37-41), but in the end he is reduced to claiming that a woman who asks for gifts in exchange for sex receives no gratia (1.10.43-44), an observation that can hardly be expected to make a significant impact on his mistress. Even his last appeal to the example of the Sabine Women can be seen to have been undermined by Dipsas (1.8.39-40), who pointed out the irrelevance of

nostalgic morality in the pragmatics of contemporary love-making.

As if rhetorically exhausted after a tirade on an issue to which his heart was never really committed, Ovid now begins to compromise (1.10.53-64). There are exceptions to the rule, rich men for example:

nec tamen indignum est a divite praemia posci:

munera poscenti quod dare possit habet; 1.10.53-54

his tone practically amounts to encouragement in this regard: <sup>20</sup>

carpite de plenis pendentibus vitibus uvas,

praebeat Alcinoi poma benignus ager. 1.10.55-56

What has happened to the elegist's usual stand on this topic? Essentially, Ovid's utterances are entirely self-seeking. His real object is not to dissuade his mistress from allowing her character to be corrupted by associating sex with presents, but rather to avoid having to furnish her with expensive gifts himself. The poet, being pauper, will donate virtues like studium and fides (1.10.57) and, of course, poems (1.10.62), not the usual material things like fine clothing, precious stones, and gold (1.10.61). Yet even this is undermined in the final couplet of the elegy where Ovid does a volte-face and declares that he will give his mistress presents if she ceases to whine for them. The reader is left with the impression that the entire speech, though entertaining, has been a complete waste of time, since the elegiac persona has not succeeded in maintaining his position at all.

Amores 1.14 treats a topic familiar from Latin love elegy and Hellenistic epigram.<sup>21</sup> Since the poet is faced with a fait accompli his speech to the amica cannot dissuade her from employing luxurious commodities on her hair, but it can serve to exacerbate her distress at losing her hair so that she will never use dye again.<sup>22</sup> In addition, the topic provides Ovid with an ideal opportunity to champion nature over cosmetic art which is corrupted by luxurious ingredients. However, in this elegy he pinpoints the dyeing of hair alone, and does not include a castigation of other forms of cosmetics. While Propertius may object to the adorning and setting of hair in various unnatural styles (Prop. 1.2.1, 3), Ovid presents this as a commendable property of his girl's natural locks:

adde quod et dociles et centum flexibus apti  
et tibi nullius causa doloris erant                      Am. 1.14.13-14

and

ante meos saepe est oculos ornata...                      1.14.17

Ovid also takes pains to reiterate the attractiveness of hair that is left natural and undressed: it was her natural cosmetic ("ornatrix tuto corpore semper erat" 1.14.16).<sup>23</sup> The oxymoronic tone is sustained by the manner in which Ovid describes his mistress' former beauty using metaphors of luxury. In 1.14.5-6 he compares her locks to fine Chinese silk:

quid, quod erant tenues et quos ornare timeres,  
vela colorati qualia Seres habent.

The hair's natural and striking feature was its fineness (like a spider's web 1.14.7-8), and the implication follows that its quality earns it as high a value as an expensive imported material. Similarly, in an extended comparison (1.14.9-12), Ovid suggests that the hair's colour rivalled that of expensive cedar wood, (though this sounds like an attempt to give a dull mousy brown some measure of distinction):

non tamen ater erat neque erat tamen aureus ille  
sed, quamvis neuter, mixtus uterque color,  
qualem clivosae madidis in vallibus Idae  
ardua derepto cortice cedrus habet.

The lushness of the Idaean valley connotes the fertility of the lady's former head of hair as well as its unspoilt naturalness, while cedrus contributes an exotic and luxurious note. Another remarkable mixture of the natural and the luxurious comes in lines 19-20, where tangled hair is visualised against the crimson wealth of imported fabric:

saepe etiam nondum digestis mane capillis  
purpureo iacuit semisupina toro.

Ovid craftily demonstrates that natural beauty can be as enticing as beauty aided by luxurious cosmetics, if perceived from a



different standpoint. In fact, luxury can lead to the destruction of beauty and afterwards to the victim having recourse to other luxurious articles such as wigs which only bring humiliation,<sup>26</sup> embarrassment, and desolation.

Amores 3.8(7) is an elegy that presents a more traditional approach to the topic of luxury and love. In many ways it is<sup>27</sup> highly reminiscent of Propertius and Tibullus. The occasion for launching into an invective against wealth is thoroughly elegiac. The poet finds himself shut out by his mistress while a rich man is allowed inside:

cum bene laudavit, laudato ianua clausa est:

turpiter hic illuc ingeniosus eo.

ecce recens dives parto per vulnera censu

praefertur nobis sanguine pastus eques. Am. 3.8(7)7-10

And yet despite the elegiac context the poem successfully airs rhetorical commonplaces of more universal applicability on the subject of wealth.

Initially, it appears as if Ovid is going to denounce in abstract terms the contemporary neglect of culture and esteem of money (ingenuas...artes 1, ingenium 3). However, it soon becomes clear that the poet's concern is of a more specific and personal nature. Love poetry has no effect in the very sphere for which it was designed (3.8(7).5-8). The rest of the elegy comprises a direct address to his mistress and utterances that are not

intended for a specific audience (25-66).

In attempting to dissuade the girl from a liaison with the rich upstart, he employs the man's weapons against himself. It is a commonplace in elegy that the rich rival is often a soldier who has returned with booty from his campaigns. Ovid does not say much about his rival's wealth directly.<sup>28</sup> Instead he chooses to concentrate on the manner in which the soldier won his fortune, dissecting his body and analysing each piece for evidence of bloodshed (11-22), the effect desired being the girl's revulsion at the impurity of the soldier's body. By contrast the poet-lover is unstained by gore: "ille ego Musarum purus Phoebique sacerdos" (3.8.(7).23). The ritual and moral elevation of Ovid is pointed and deliberate, despite the reader's inevitable cynicism at this claim.

In order to make a comparison with the Golden Age more relevant,<sup>29</sup> Ovid introduces the topic via a specific mythological example, the seduction of Danae by Jupiter in the role of the rich adulterer. The interpretation of the myth is consciously prosaic and materialistic; the shower of gold becomes a luxurious bribe for sexual favours:<sup>30</sup>

Iuppiter, admonitus nihil esse potentius auro,  
corruptae pretium virginis ipse fuit.  
dum merces aberat, durus pater, ipsa severa,  
aerati postes, ferrea turris erat. 3.8(7).29-32

It is no longer Jupiter's thunderbolt that is the most powerful

force, but gold. Chastity (ipsa severa 30) is inevitably overthrown at the onset of wealth. Jupiter's precedent effectively concluded the Golden Age from the elegiac point of view. At this point all the traditional conceits associated with the Age of Saturn are enumerated.<sup>31</sup> The list is concluded with a fusion of wealth and warfare:

eruimus terra solidum pro frugibus aurum;  
possidet inventas sanguine miles opes.      3.8.(7).53-54

Ovid's personal frustration at being outdone by a rich rival is carefully given magnitude by its inclusion in a list of more serious types of corruption and decay. The fact that political and judicial advancement are now the prerogative of the rich,

curia pauperibus clausa est, dat census honores:  
inde gravis iudex, inde severus eques      3.8(7).55-56

does not really justify an invective against wealth's dominance of love, because the elegiac life-style shirks all the values and responsibilities of "traditional" Roman life anyway. The pose of severus does not fit a lusor amorum very well.

Ovid concludes the elegy by returning to the exemplification of the topic in an erotic context (3.8(7).59-66). Just as Danae's severitas was pointless and defenceless against the onslaught of gold (3.8(7).29-32), so the poet's mistress is as good as conquered when accosted by a wealthy suitor, even if she has a

morality to match that of the tetricas...Sabinas (3.8(7).61-  
32 62). The erotic success of money is conceived simplistically as  
automatic and inevitable:

imperat ut captae, qui dare multa potest. 3.8(7).62

This belief in spontaneous corruption once women and wealth are put together is a recurrent one in Latin love elegy and, as has been seen, perhaps masks problems in the psyche of the elegiac persona. Rejection by one's mistress is thus conveniently explained as stemming from a reason that is beyond the lover's control and is not due to a flaw or failure on his own part. The materialism of another is much easier to endure than one's own inadequacies. This interpretation is justified by Ovid's insistence on the physical repulsiveness of his rival (3.8(7).11-21). The rich lover may have money, but he can scarcely compete with the elegiac lover in attractiveness, sensitivity, or erotic technique.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1) A complaint which both Propertius and Tibullus make, though Am. 1.8.77 ("surda sit oranti tua ianua, laxa ferenti"), for example, and 3.8(7), show that Ovid is familiar with the conceit.

2) Some favour Ovid as imitator: Williams, G. (1968) p. 545 "...directly and obviously based on Prop.4.5"; Courtney, E. (1969) BICS 16: 80; Morgan, K. (1977) p. 80; but see McKeown, J.C. (1989) p. 200, who demonstrates that certainty on this question is impossible.

3) Eg. the προκυκλῖς or μαστροπός in Herondas 1 (Headlam), Plaut. Mostellaria 157ff, Tib. 1.5.47ff, Apuleius Met. 9.15f (sermocinatrix...[anus] 16).

4) For evidence of real lenae in antiquity see Aristoph. Frogs 1079, Wasps 1028, and

... ἡ δούλη τινος  
προαγωγὸς οὗς' ἐνετρύλλισεν τῷ δεσπότῃ,  
ἡ πεμπομένη τις ἀγγελίας ψευδεῖς φέρει,  
ἡ μοιχὸς εἴ τις ἑξαπατᾷ ψευδῇ λέγων  
καὶ μὴ δίδωσιν ἂν ὑποσχητὰ ποτε,  
ἡ δῶρά τις δίδωσι μοιχῷ γραῦς γυνή.  
εἶνα αὐτῇ συγγένηται.

Thesm. 340-45

Theopompus FHG 1.321 (ap. Athenaeus 10.443a):

τὰς μαστροποὺς τὰς εἰθισμένας προαγωγεύειν τὰς ἐλευθέρους γυναῖκας  
St. Basil in Is. 5 p. 491: προαγωγῶ τινι γυναικὶ... ἡ μετὰ τὸ  
πᾶσαν ἀσέλγειαν ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ σώματι ἀπαθλῆσαι ταῖς νέκεις.

See also legislation against such people under the general title of lenocinium, a fact that proves that they really existed, Dig. 48.5, Vita Alex. Sev. 24, Nov. Theodos. 18, Tertull.

de Fruga 13, Paul. 2.26.11, Suet. Tib. 35, Tac. Ann. 2.85, and D-S iii.2 p. 1101 s.v. lenocinium col.ii (G. Humbert).

5) See sententiae like: "casta est quam nemo rogavit" 43, "aera nitent usu etc..." 51, "impia sub dulci melle venena latent" 104.

6) Cf. TLL ii.1909.32 ff. = felix ; N & H on Hor. Od. 2.2.18; = "wealthy" see TLL ii.1917.31 ff.; also Prop. 2.6.6, 2.20.25, 2.24C.49, 2.26.25. Notice that in Herodas' mime, the bawd advertises her client's physical and (therefore) social excellence, modesty, and innocence more than his wealth: ...ὁ πέντε νικέων ἄθλα, παῖς μὲν ἐν Πυθοῖ, / δις δ' ἐν Κορίνθῳ τοὺς ἱουλον ἀνθεῦντας, / ἄνδρας δὲ Πίσση δις καθεῖλε πυκτεύσας, / πλουτέων τὸ καλόν, οὐδὲ κάρφος ἐκ τῆς γῆς / κινέων, ἄθικτος ἐς Κυθηρίην σφηγίς, ...

1.51-55 (Headlam), though she reiterates the financial benefits in such a liaison a little later: καὶ δοῖα πρήξεις· ἡδέων τεύξῃ καὶ σοι / δοθήσεται τι μέζον ἢ δοκεῖς.  
(64-65)

7) On felix here see McKeown J. C. (1989) p. 215 TLL vi.442.26 ff., and Tib. 2.2.15 f.

8) Eg. "si simules, prodest; verus obesse solet" 1.8.36, "nec nocuit simulatus amor..." 1.8.71, simultates 82, "quin etiam discant oculi lacrimare coacti, / ... / nec, si quem falles, tu periurare timeto" 83-85.

9) See Newman, J.K. (1967) p. 397, and McKeown, J.C. op. cit. p. 235 on these lines. Ovid Ars Am. 2.277-280 is a virtual restatement of this idea though it is linked more closely with the degradation of the age (ironically labelled aurea...saecula):

aurea sunt vere nunc saecula: plurimus auro  
venit honos, auro conciliatur amor.  
ipse licet venias Musis comitatus, Homere,  
si nihil attuleris, ibis, Homere, foras.

10) Other scholars assume that the curse is a vicious one and the worst Ovid could think of, eg. Davis, J.T. (1981) p. 2483, but surely the fate proposed seems gentle when compared with the violence of Propertius?

11) Cf. esp. Prop. 2.23, 3.13, but also 1.8, 2.16 and 4.5, Tib. 1.4.57-70, 1.5.47-48, 1.9, 2.3.35-58, 2.4.

12) In a way, the elegy presents an ironic vindication of Propertius' gift of garlands and apples in Prop. 1.3.21-26, cf. Morgan, K. (1977) p. 72.

13) Ironically, Cynthia herself draws parallels from Greek myth in her furious outburst: she has been spinning like Penelope and playing Orpheus' lyre during his absence (1.3.41-42).

14) Curran, L.C. (1964) Phoenix 18: 314.

15) Helen (1.10.1-2) who commits adultery with Paris, Leda (3-4) who does it with Zeus, and Aymone (5-6) who is stolen from one "lover" (a satyr) and is "raped" by another (Poseidon, so McKeown, J.C. (1989) pp. 284-285). The first example does not bode well; Helen is beautiful but notorious for the trouble she causes, registered here by the phrase "coniugibus belli causa duobus erat" (2). Notice too how Propertius' women are all more securely victims rather than instigators of trouble.

16) Much of this has been subverted by Am. 1.9, eg. "militat omnis amans, et habet sua castra Cupido" (1.9.1), and for "non decet inbelles aera merere deos" (Am. 1.10.20) compare "iussit (sc. Mars) et in castris aera merere suis" (Am. 1.9.44 ).

17) Notice the rhetorical self-consciousness of the phrase sumite in exemplum (1.10.25).

18) For cuivis mercabilis (Am. 1.10.21) compare Prop.2.16.15 "ergo muneribus quivis mercatur amorem?" and his somewhat more impassioned response to this question.

19) In a later poem, with an amusing twist, Ovid bewails the fact that his poems have advertised his mistress to the world, resulting in her loss:

fallimur, an nostris innotuit illa libellis?

sic erit: ingenio prostitit illa meo.

et merito: quid enim formae praeconia feci?

vendibilis culpa facta puella mea est.

me lenone placet, duce me perductus amator,

ianua per nostras est adaperata manus. (Am. 3.12.7-12)

Poetry has therefore contributed to a dreadful but not unexpected result. Although other elegists proclaimed the fame of their mistress/poetry, eg. Prop. 2.24.2, 25.3, 3.24.3-4, they never envisaged the outcome realised here.

20) This is the very advice we would expect the lena of Am.1.8 to give her charge.



21) Hair-dyeing occurs in epigram alongside accusations of old age in women, eg.

ἔτ' τετρηκόσι' ἐστίν· ἔχεις δὲ σὺ τοὺς ἐνιαυτοὺς  
δὲς τόσσους, τρυφερὴ Λαῖ' κορωνεκάβη,  
Σισύφου ὦ μάμμη, καὶ Δευκαλίωνος ἀδελφή·  
βάπτε δὲ τὰς λευκάς, καὶ λέγε πᾶσι τατᾶ.

A.P. 11.67

and A.P. 11.66, 69, 408. Cf. also Martial 3.43, 6.57, 14.26.

22) Note the way he rubs it in by repeating the fact that her hair no longer exists (1.14.2, 31, 35).

23) Cf. also "...nondum digestis mane capillis" (19) (for digestis meaning "(carefully) arranged" see McKeown, J.C. (1989) p. 170 on 1.7.12), "...quoque erat neglecta decens" (21), "sponte decent" (28); by contrast the wigs she is now reduced to wearing have lost the fresh spontaneity they boasted while on the heads of their original owners (captivos...crines 45). For praise of untended hair in general see Tib. 1.8.15 f. and McKeown, J.C. op. cit. p. 371 on 1.14.19-22. For the sophistication inherent in undressed or simply dressed hair cf. Hor. Od. 1.5.4-5 "cui flavam religas comam/simplex munditiis", and though not concerned with hair compare Prop. 4.8.40 "munda sine arte". For an entirely different attitude see Ovid AA 3.133:

munditiis capimur: non sint sine lege capilli.

24) Interpreting the colour intended as "auburn" (in McKeown, J.C. (1989) p. 369 who draws upon Lee and H. Gilbert-Carter of the Cam. Univ. Botanical Garden who assume they can safely identify the species of juniper referred to here) seems to me to

risk falling victim to Ovid's poetical rhetoric. Lucretius DRN 4.1153-1170 shows that lovers (...cupidine caeci, 1153) will often make mundane, even offensive traits in their women sound more attractive. For the expensiveness of cedar, see Meiggs (1982) pp. 55, 292-293.

25) Probably intended with 21-22 to recall the opening of Prop. 1.3, but see McKeown, J.C. (1989) p. 373.

26) Rubebis 1.14.47, 50-54.

27) Eg. Prop.2.16, Tib. 1.9, 2.4. See Morgan, K. (1977) pp. 93-94 for Ovid's conscious adaptation in Am. 3.8.57-62 of an idea in Prop. 2.26B.21-28.

28) The phrase parto per vulnera censu (9) is strictly outside his address to the girl; the only mention he makes of wealth is in line 15 (aurum, the gold ring of the egues), and of course the Vocative avara (22) implies her motives are mercenary.

29) The Golden Age, along with the invention of ships, is a motif that is exploited in Am. 2.11(12).1-6.

30) Antipater of Thessalonica interprets the Danae myth in this way too (A.P. 5.31); cf. A.P. 5.33, 34 (Parmenion), 125 (Bassus), and from a later period A.P. 12.239 (Strato),

Πέντ' αἰτέεις, δέκα δώσω· εἴκοσι δ' ἅντιά ἔξεις  
ἄρκεϊ σοι χρυσοῦς; ἤρκεσε καὶ Δανάη.

31) No metals (36-38), spontaneous fruits (39-41), no land division (42), no seafaring (43-44), no walled cities (47), no warfare (48); the sky will be the next region man's greed conquers (49-50)

32) Nostalgia for Sabine morality is already passe, see Am. 1.8.39-40

## CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

Latin Love Elegy is a rhetorical genre. Its hypothetical goal is to communicate with the loved one and thereby seduce her or him. In the Introduction to this dissertation I outlined the traditional literary concept of luxury and demonstrated that luxury found its way as a theme into erotic contexts. Luxury inevitably became part of the lives of wealthy Romans who enjoyed the comforts of exotic imports and fashions but also felt obliged by their sense of tradition to distrust the pleasure they derived from these foreign delights. This led to a situation where moral thinking and practice were often at odds with each other. Luxury was therefore a rhetorical concept. Whether or not a Roman objected to luxury, or even acknowledged it, was often dependent upon circumstances that did not concern luxury per se. Luxury, as one of a range of literary themes available to the elegist, provided a suitable rhetorical tool with which to depict aspects of the elegiac life of love, given the ambiguity of such a theme.

In all three elegists, the reader gains the impression that the love poet is pauper to varying degrees, or tries to live like a pauper. Paupertas as the economic status of the lover is most fully developed in Tibullus (e.g. 1.1), but Propertius and Ovid also seem to be only moderately well-to-do. The elegiac mistress is an idealised figure: beautiful and refined. The standards set by Love Elegy require her to be chaste and unmercenary in her choice of a lover. Above all she must be faithful to the elegist alone (cf. Prop. 1.2.26). The ironies in such a construct are obvious. In order to live a life of love, an individual requires

considerable leisure, and leisure is extremely expensive. Thus the elegiac persona's pose as pauper is revealed to be a literary fiction. As shown in my Introduction, women are traditionally perceived as avaricious beings, and so are predictably disdainful of Elegy's strictures on gifts and fidelity (cf. the advice of the lenae in Prop. 4.5 and Ov. Am 1.8). Under these conditions the erotic ideal is at variance with the realities of Roman society, and the tension between the erotic world-view and reality is cunningly evoked by the elegists as their texts move from one erotic crisis to another.

Sometimes, the elegists present a moralistic facade. Propertius, for example, occasionally gives the impression that he is concerned with general moral standards in women (e.g. Prop. 1.11.17,29, 2.16.47-54). The elegist readily exploits the rhetorical tropes of traditional castigation of luxury to argue his point (eg. Tib. 1.9.7-12). Aside from the immediate paradox of an elegiac lover leading an immoral life and yet criticising other types of immorality, one should remember that fear of competition from wealthier suitors is usually on the elegist's mind (eg. Prop. 2.16, Tib. 1.8 - Marathus and Pholoe -, Tib. 1.9), and provides the stimulus for such castigations of luxury. Moralistic role-playing conceals the actual rhetorical goals of the lover.

Thus, on a cynical level, one can read the treatment of luxury as the lover's deliberate employment of a rhetorical tool to seduce his loved one and amuse the reader. However, on another level,

the elegist's handling of the theme can give the reader a clearer understanding<sup>of</sup> the psychology of eros. We can view the lover as believing in his own rhetoric, and hence losing his hold on reality; he clings tenaciously to the rhetorical construct which he has inherited from the erotic literary tradition and to which he has himself contributed. But the foundation upon which the construct rests is ultimately the mistress herself. In such a situation, one might ask who really holds the power, the speaker, or, as Socrates insinuated in the Gorgias (502e5-502a1), the target of persuasion. It is the mistress who determines the direction of the lover's rhetoric, and the lover is compelled to follow that direction economically, while attempting to present a plausible and consistent value-system. Consequently, the elegist's stance on the subject of luxury, though apparently consistent, is a transparent charade (cf. the complexities of Ov. Am. 1.10.53 ff.). In Tibullus' case, the failure of the elegist's rhetoric is strikingly depicted by the pathetic surrender of his value-system in 2.3 and 2.4. The elegiac lover does not reject luxury in itself - why should he? - but only in so far as it impedes his access to the mistress. When all else fails, even luxury will be embraced as an ally in seduction.

A study of luxury as a theme in Latin Love Elegy helps us to understand the nature of this genre and the elegiac persona. In addition, the elegists' treatment of luxury shows us how poets were able to incorporate a literary and social phenomenon into their work, while preserving and exploiting the fundamental ambiguities in Roman perceptions of this phenomenon.

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